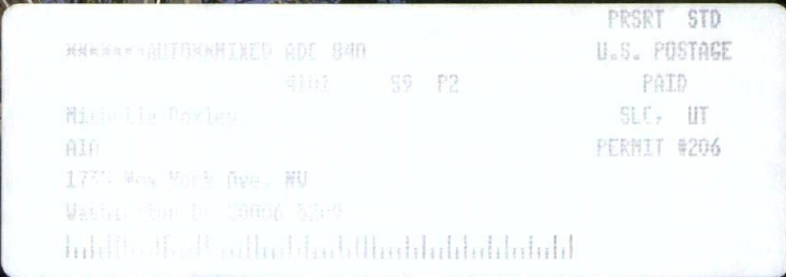


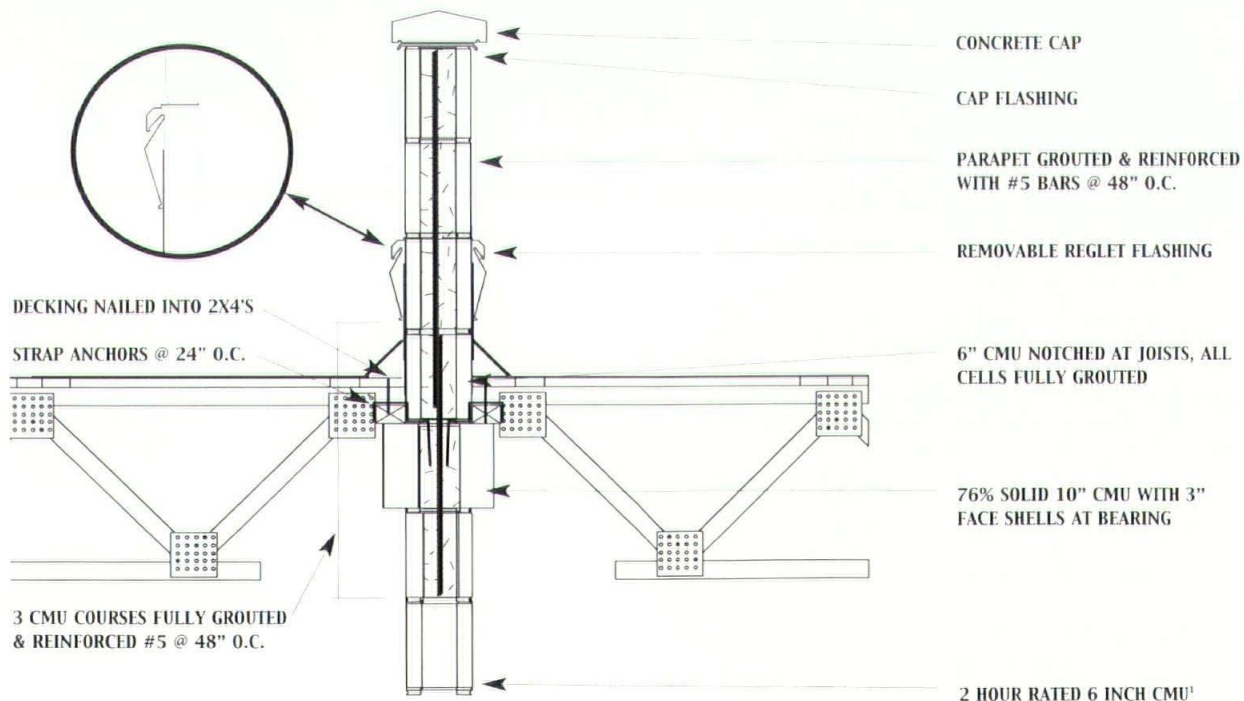
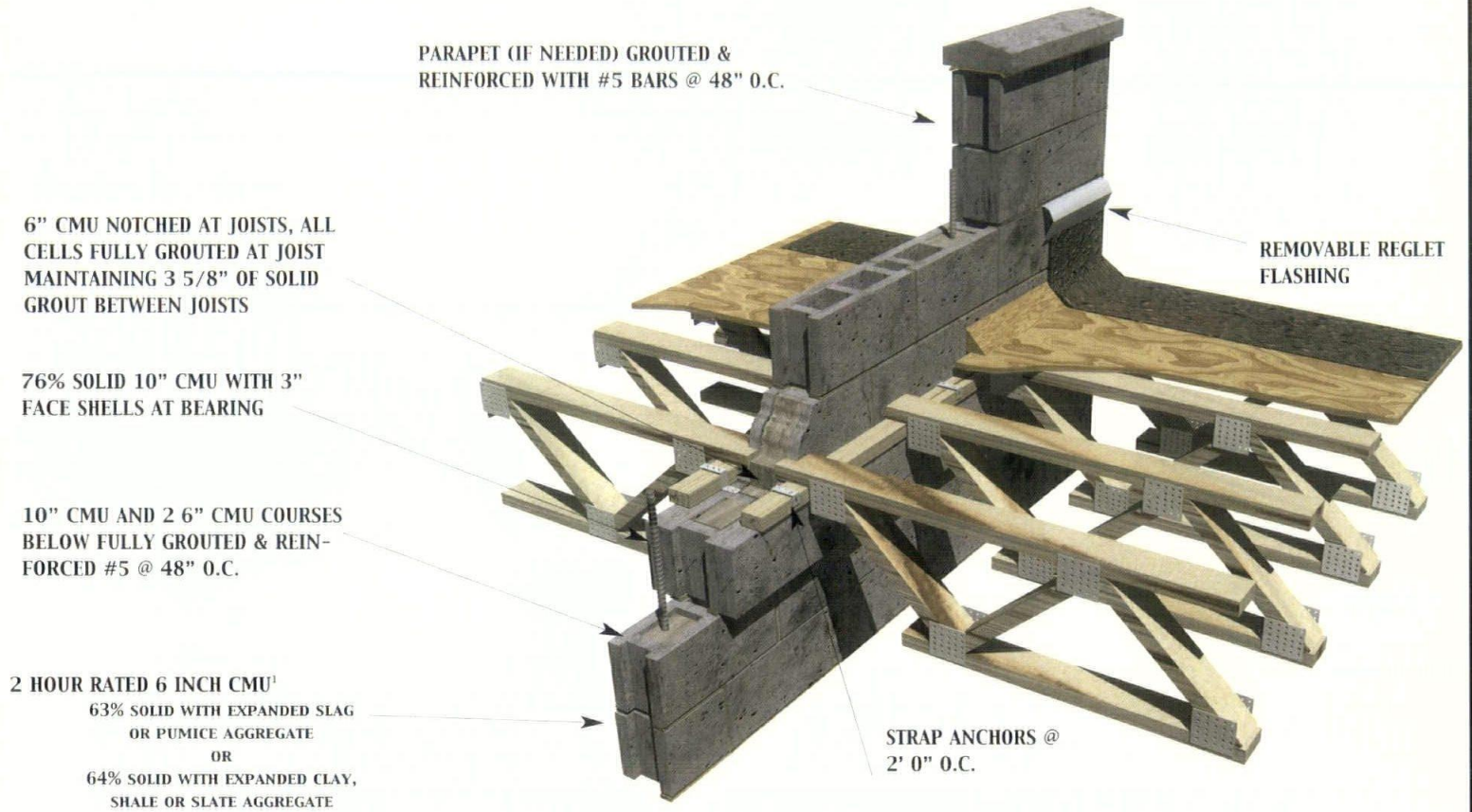
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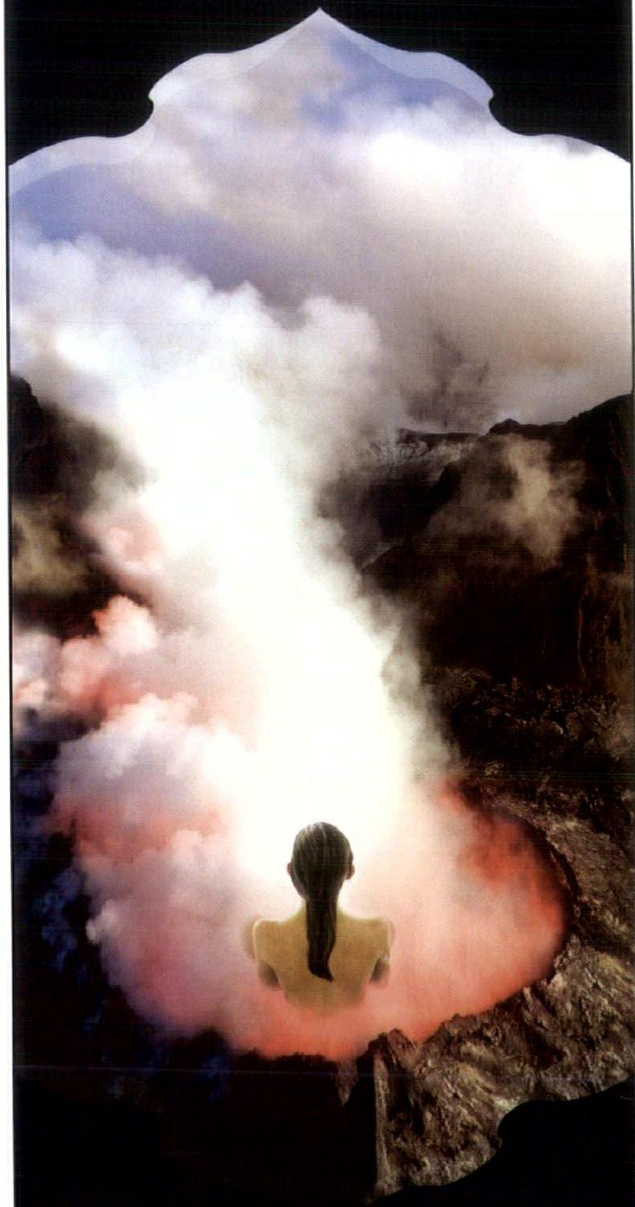


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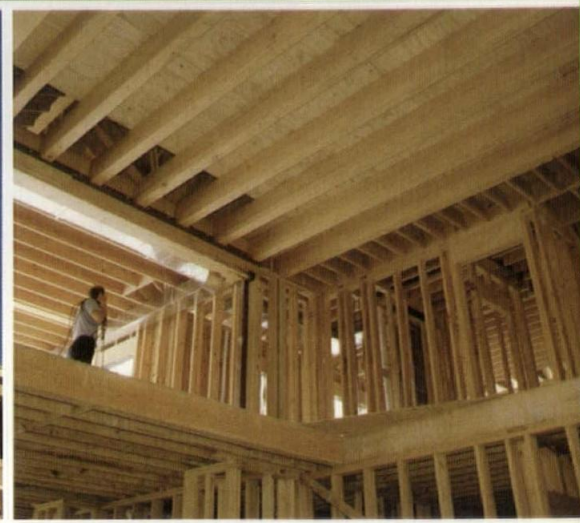
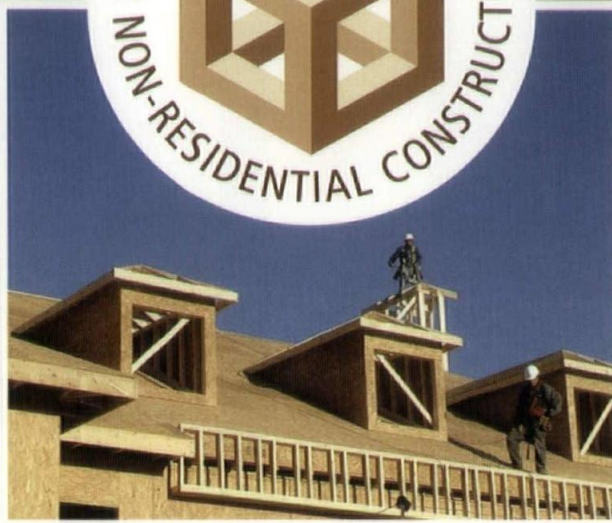
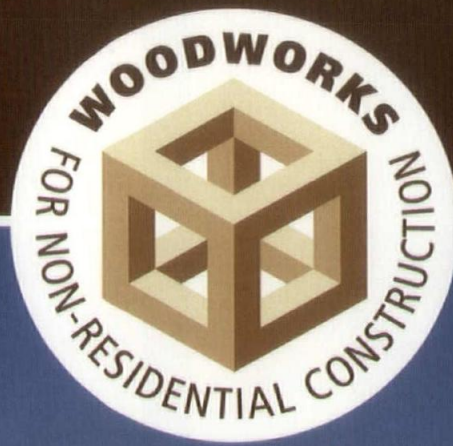
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CHICAGO ARCHITECT

Letters to the Editor

ROCK ON

Thanks to Cindy Coleman on her extraordinary article, "She came in through the Bathroom Window" (November | December).

I would like to make a clarifying comment.

Compared to NYC, where bedrock is virtually at grade (as seen in Central Park), Chicago has always had to try harder since our soil conditions are poorer. The rigorous challenges have forced our designers to become more innovative, starting with foundation design in the 1800s, and on into the 1900s with our construction techniques. Chicago designers have traditionally had a more rigorous discipline. As a result, this might be an explanation of the difference between NYC and Chicago architectural expression of the past.

Now with design globalization, so much of the historic identity of cities has been lost. There is no "there" there. It is now "anywhere" there.

Thanks.

Gertude Lempp Kerbis, FAIA

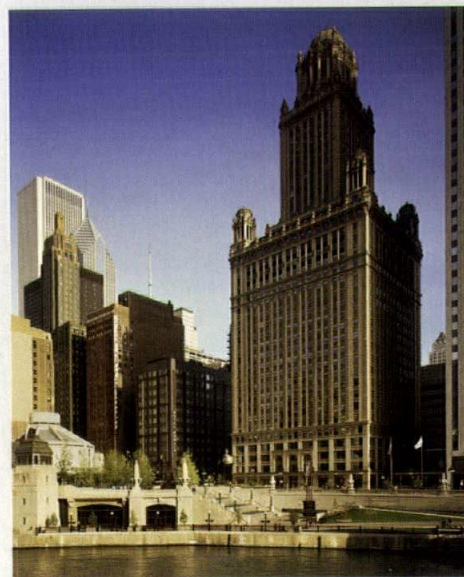
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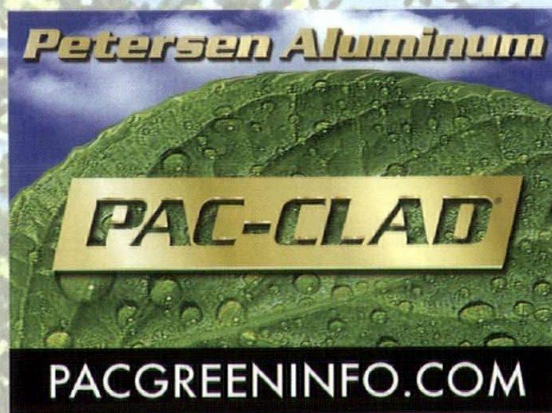
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President's letter

The idea of hope and change is certainly current in Chicago now, with Barack Obama beginning his presidency. This year we'll celebrate 100 years of the Burnham and Bennett Plan, and in October we'll find out about our Olympic bid. As Chicagoans and as architects, we live and practice in a very exciting time.

We're welcoming a new AIA Chicago board that is more diverse than ever—in gender, race and ethnicity; in the type of work practiced, and in representation from both small and large firms. It had been moving in this direction for the past few years, but this year the nominating committee and leadership worked hard to put together a diverse, multi-disciplinary group to better serve you, our members.

It's not only about the important task of acknowledging and encouraging the work of women and minorities; it extends to recognizing that Chicago architects work in firms of all sizes and focus on many different types of work.

Also, as an effort to increase communication, I've included my e-mail address below. I want to respond to whatever inquiries and needs you have from AIA Chicago, so please feel free to contact me. And in turn, I want your help as we promote the importance of architects in community service, government advocacy and sustainable design. Architects are critical thinkers, we're client advisers, and we're stewards of the community.

I want to thank Rik Master, our past president, and the outgoing AIA Chicago board members for their commitment, service, and hard work. As an organization, we continue to improve based on our collective accomplishments.

Two years ago, at the AIA National Grassroots event in Washington, D.C., 10 of us from AIA Chicago met with both of the state's senators. Later that same day, Obama announced he would run for president. I don't want to suggest that we have an inside connection to the White House, but we can, at least, bring the same message of hope and change into our own organization. I look forward to an eventful and rewarding year ahead.

Grant C. Uhlir, AIA | President | AIA Chicago
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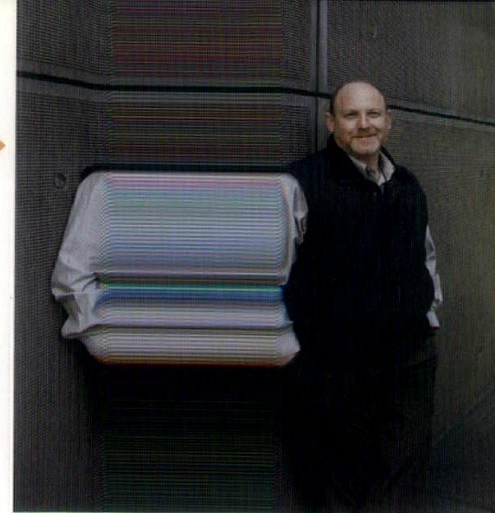
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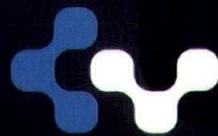


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THE JOY OF SETS

SOM's Leigh Breslau designs staging for Court Theatre



Photo courtesy of Ray Vick

Breslau's set for "Uncle Vanya" was called Tatlin's Treehouse.

Ever since his days of acting in high school and college plays, Leigh Breslau, AIA, has loved the theater. As a design partner at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill he creates entire performing arts facilities. So it is not surprising that he was eager to take on the challenging role of stage designer.

His debut production, Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya," was the result of a meeting with Charles Newell, artistic director of Chicago's Court Theatre. It opened in January 2007 at the theater in the Museum of Contemporary Art.

The five-month design process began with a close reading of the play's text. One line in particular about the country house setting—"It's like a labyrinth, with 26 enormous rooms"—caught Breslau's attention. He gathered a variety of inspirational images, from paintings done

in that era to contemporary neon sculptures by Dan Flavin. His concept for the set was an emotional gymnasium, with people getting lost in a vertical maze. Drawings and models were produced at SOM, where he heads the Arts and Assemblies Studio. The following year Breslau worked with Newell again, this time at the Court's own theater in Hyde Park, on Shakespeare's "Titus Andronicus."

His current project is Henrik Ibsen's "The Wild Duck," which runs Jan. 15-Feb. 15 in the MCA Theater. Once again Breslau drew on varied inspirational images, including a vintage shot of a photographer's studio, the sculptures of Martin Puryear ("very elemental and abstracted, but evoking the past") and the Tadao Ando-designed Asian art gallery at the Art Institute of Chicago. The set, he says, will have a rough, industrial character.

Talking with Newell and Breslau

Chicago Architect: Charlie, how is working with Leigh different from working with people trained as set designers?

Charles Newell: Leigh is used to creating spaces that contain people and things, not just spaces for actors to move around in. He thinks aggressively about the skeleton of the space, and his designs tend to be more vertical. And he is used to working in a very collaborative way. ➔

The Joy of Sets

continued from page 11

CA: What else is special about his designs?

Newell: Unlike many other theaters, at the Court we do not have a lot of scenery changes, so one gesture must serve the entire world of the play. It should be a metaphoric rather than literal representation of the space. Leigh's sets give the actors innumerable ways to convey the emotional relationships in the space.

When Leigh designs a space for us it cries out to be played, almost like a musical instrument.

CA: Leigh, why did you want to design sets for the Court Theatre?

Breslau: At SOM I design performing arts facilities, and I thought it would enrich my insight to actually work in the theater.

CA: How do you think your work differs from that of trained set designers?

Breslau: I don't worry as much about sight lines

Photo by Connor Steinkamp | Steinkamp Photography



Leigh Breslau

as most theater designers do. In my set for "Titus Andronicus," some scenes were only visible in the mirror, and the audience was not sure exactly where the action was taking place.

CA: How is it similar to practicing architecture?

Breslau: It's a collaborative, nonlinear process where we keep cycling through and reworking different design schemes.

CA: What are the challenges?

Breslau: You're working on an unbelievably tight budget on something that is very intense yet short-lived. The late nights and inventiveness are like those of an architecture charrette, but it is even more intense because of the live element provided by the actors. And the Court produces very demanding plays that require a lot of thought.

CA: What are the rewards?

Breslau: Everyone loves what they're doing, and appreciates what everyone else does. It's one of the most exciting things I've ever done.

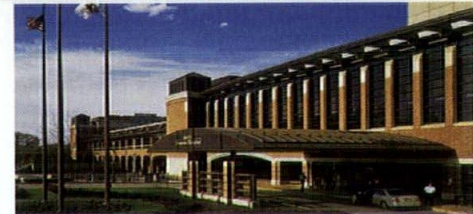
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HOME AT LAST

Former CHA building to become museum dedicated to public housing

The three-story brick building at 1322 W. Taylor St. in Little Italy looks humble and somewhat derelict now, but in its day it was part of one of the most optimistic modern social welfare movements—and planners hope that within a few years, it will return to life as the National Public Housing Museum.

Designed by Holabird & Root and completed in 1939, the building is the only one that remains of 32 that made up Jane Addams Homes, one of the city's earliest public housing developments. The building "is interesting as public housing, because it has no frills but it's really nicely proportioned," says Pete Landon, FAIA, the Landon Bone Baker principal who has designed the building's restoration and a streetfront addition for the museum's organizers, who are aiming for a 2012 opening.

Landon's design calls for removing the first floor, which is now a few feet above grade, in order to give the building a sidewalk-level entry and to create an interior space 11.5 feet high that is more suited to gallery and exhibit space than the original apartments would be. This and a glassy addition intended to house a restaurant will also integrate the building into the street's vibrant restaurant and pedestrian life in a way that the Addams Homes never did.

Inside, along with office space, will be six or seven apartments preserved as they were originally laid out, and decorated as residents in different eras might have done. Museum planners expect to have interpretive exhibits that detail how life was lived here, and also explore the history and controversies of the public housing movement.

At a time when most of Chicago's 20th century public housing has been demolished, this building is a reminder that Chicago for decades played a leadership role in urban America's effort to "provide decent housing for working people that



Images courtesy of Landon Bone Baker Architects

A glassy wrap on the street-side face of the 1939 structure (above) blends the museum into Taylor Street's restaurant milieu, but the original H-shaped structure is left largely intact (below). Its internal courtyard and other details demonstrate that early public housing buildings were considerably more humane than the brutal highrises that came later.

was in contrast to the crowded tenement housing of the 19th century," says Royce Yeater. The Midwest director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which contributed funds to the museum's planning process, Yeater is a member of the museum's advisory committee.

Chicago, Yeater says, is a logical place for a national institution dedicated to public housing, because the city was both a center of modernist design and social-improvement campaigns, and a role model for other cities' public housing, "if only because of the quantity of housing that was being built here."

The former Jane Addams site is an apt location for the museum, Yeater notes, because it is associated with the earlier years of public housing, "when there was idealism about what could be done. If you look at some of the architectural renderings from the 1920s and 1930s, they're exquisite environments—open space environments that would provide amenities that were perceived to have been inadequate in [poor people's] housing: clean lines of sight, clean air, open space.

"This was before public housing in Chicago turned into vertical ghettos, warehouses of the poor." → **Dennis Rodkin**



TOUR DE FORCE

Don McKay's European wanderings taught him a few things

A trip to Europe is more part and parcel of an architectural education than an exception, making Don McKay's expedition less than unusual. But he completed his first jaunt to Europe at age 49, a rare delay for an architect.

Having worked at the alphabet soup of Chicago architecture firms, Nagle Hartray Danker Kagan McKay Penney, since 1984 and serving as one of the firm's principals since 1994, McKay, AIA, applied for and received the 2007 Francis J. Plym Traveling Fellowship for alumni of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The fellowship awarded a \$20,000 stipend.

After packing and repacking his backpack "half a dozen times" to fit books, watercolors and sketch pads, McKay flew to Copenhagen as his starting point. From there, he wound his way through 19 different European cities from September through December 2007.

"I wish I would have done it sooner but I'm sure I got more out of it," McKay says. "Mid-career you get bogged down with day-to-day deadlines. I had four months without a deadline to think about architecture and do watercolors."

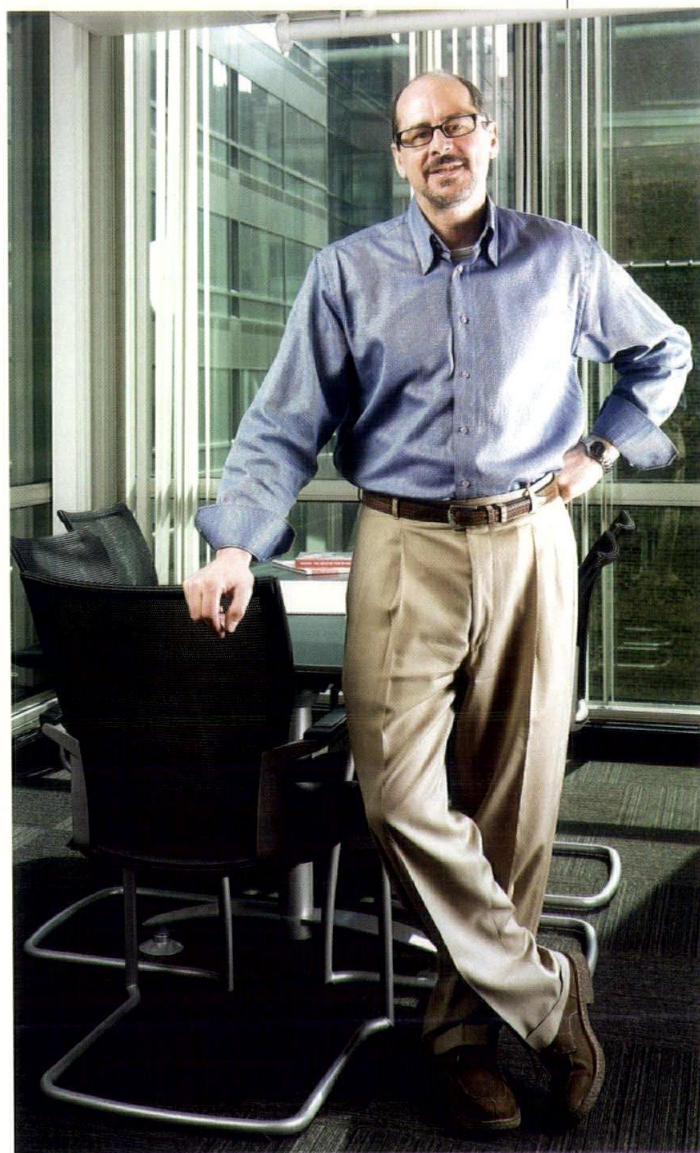
So exactly what did he think about? Investigating the work of Alvar Aalto and Eero Saarinen was "an obvious connection" for this fan of Chicago modernist architecture, "because they taught a generation of architects, and for their concern for human scale and the craft of architecture."

Among the epiphanies that McKay had during his travels are:

- Site-specific works. "There is architecture that is trying to develop a universal language, like Mies in New York or Germany; then there's another strain, like [Harry] Weese and [Ed] Dart, developing architecture associated with a particular place or project. I realized where I stand. The stuff that I liked best was more particular to the place."
- The Nordic light. "In Nordic countries, even when it is sunny, it's dim. The Helsinki Railway Station looks as if it was chiseled with a dull chisel. Natural light is so precious to them—so how do you deal with it?"

McKay describes one way Aalto dealt with the scant Finnish light: In the campus library at the Helsinki Technical University, "you don't see a light fixture at all—it's all skylights—so how do they light this when it's dark out?" He discovered that regular lamps are buried in the same deep wells that hold the skylights. McKay notes this would be fairly expensive but "we'd love to try it—it's more on our radar."

- Imperfect + Contrasting = Humanistic. Of the imperfect bricks used in Aalto's St. Saynatsalo Town Hall, McKay says, "If a brick salesman brought it in we would throw him out for bringing in such a horrible brick." And yet he concedes that the seemingly flawed material and consequent sense of imperfection impart a human quality to the architecture. So does the mixing of rustic and modern materials—something for which Aalto is known. "It creates an intimacy—something that resonates with people at a psychological level," he concludes.



Don McKay

For McKay, the journey abroad reinforced his fondness for what he calls 'humanist modernism,' and he's wasted no time in furthering his firm's work in this style. A current firm project, the Fountaindale Public Library in Bolingbrook, Ill., will have a palette of two extremes—rustic (plank board for ceiling and wall finishes) and glossy (highly reflective colored-glass tile next to the wood on the walls and ceiling). How does it resonate with the client? "They love it."

→ **Lara Brown**

SAGAL AS SAGE

"Wait, Wait" host suggests looking ahead

In October, Peter Sagal, the affable host of NPR's "Wait, Wait, Don't Tell Me!" came back for a second stint as master of ceremonies at Designight. In this excerpt from his comments that night, Sagal urges architects to be futurists.

Something occurred to me just about a week or so ago as I walked south down State Street across the river, to catch the El home.

I stopped at the north side of State and Wacker, and as I looked south, there were buildings around me from 10, 20, 30 and 40 years ago [and more]. The old Carbon and Carbide Building to my left, the newer Renaissance Hotel to my right, other Wacker Drive skyscrapers from the 80s and 90s to my right... even the newer buildings seemed, if you will, to belong to a past time. There was nothing in my vision from the future.

Then I turned around, and I saw two things that gave me a bit of hope. The first [was] the twin towers of Marina City, designed by Bertrand Goldberg. Even though those buildings are now more than 40 years old, they seem to belong to the future. They

were built for the 21st century—perhaps not the one we had, but the one Goldberg saw in his head, and that's good enough.

The second thing I saw was Chicago's newest skyscraper, the Trump International Hotel and Tower, by Adrian Smith, [formerly of] Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Now, I will tell you, I have a problem with that building, because of its name. I have promised myself never to enter it or spend a dime there.

But in that building is a vision of the future. I love the way it takes advantage of the curve of Wabash Avenue as it crosses the river, so that looking north on Wabash from anywhere south, it seems to dominate the horizon. I love how it asserts its own curved geometry against the grid of the street.

This is, in fact, why I love that building: it looks exactly like a building I [have seen] described in many science fiction films and books. It looks like the building the aliens built as their headquarters when they took over. And it gives me a thrill. Like I said, I'm a geek.

Here's the point: looking around on that corner that night, I realized that all those science fiction dreams of my youth were never going to happen. We'll never have flying cars because of the energy required to solve the basic equations of gravity. People won't walk around wearing cool shiny form-fitting aluminum foil suits because aluminum foil is crinkly and uncomfortable, and God knows, few of us want to wear form-fitting suits of any kind.

So, ladies and gentlemen, it's up to you. If we're going to have a future worthy of that name, if we're going to have a world that pleases and thrills somebody like me, then you're going to have to build it.

I urge you, to paraphrase the great Daniel Burnham, to make no boring plans.

Whenever possible, whenever you have the right client, and the right funding, and the right inspiration, imagine the future that most excites you, the 2009 or 2010 or 2015 you most would like to wake up in, and build that.

If you don't, then we're all going to be stuck right back here, living in the perpetual past.

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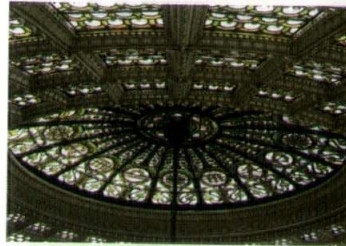
january

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1 Thomas Eddy Tallmadge, partner with Vernon Watson in a Chicago firm known for designing impressive homes in Oak Park and on the North Shore, dies in 1940 in Arcola, Ill.

2 Karl Vitzthum, the architect of at least 50 bank buildings, many of them in Chicago, born in 1880 in Munich, Germany.

8 Mary Brush, AIA, a leader of Holabird & Root's restoration of the astounding Tiffany Dome at the Cultural Center, offers insight into the painstaking project, which involved the efforts of 60 specialists, artisans and consultants. 5:30-6:30 pm at AIA Chicago



14 **Sharing Sacred Space:** a tour and discussion at Grace Place, a 1985 adaptive reuse design by Booth Hansen Associates that is the property of one denomination but has been used frequently by at least three others. 5-6:30 pm, 637 S. Dearborn St.

15 **ORD: Documenting the Definitive Modern Airport.** The Chicago Architecture Foundation opens an exhibit about O'Hare's role in shaping today's airports. The exhibit, which runs through Feb. 27, includes photos that capture the Miesian-influenced modernism at what was once the biggest and busiest airport in the world. At CAF lobby gallery, 224 S. Michigan Ave. On Jan. 16, curator Charles Waldheim discusses the exhibit at 12:15 pm at the gallery. www.architecture.org

15 John Wellborn Root, a partner with Daniel Burnham on several early structures—and whose innovations included the oversized retail display windows of the Reliance Building and a 'floating raft' system of steel beams that allowed for stability of tall buildings on the unsteady local soil—dies in 1891 in Chicago.

16 John Heinrich, co-designer of Lake Point Tower, dies in Valparaiso, Ind., in 1993.



20 **Party and MOU Signing:** AIA Chicago's Environment KC celebrates the renewal of its Memorandum of Understanding with the city's Department of the Environment, an agreement to work together to promote sustainable building. 6-8 pm at AIA Chicago

28 **Ace the Interview,** a tutorial on how to maximize your team's performance at client interviews. The session will help you prepare for the fluid conversational aspect of the question-and-answer part of competitive interviews. 5:30-7 pm at AIA Chicago

february

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11 In the centennial year of the Burnham Plan, which sought to sort out railway terminals and congestion, the chief of the Midwest High Speed Rail Association speaks about ongoing efforts to bring high-speed rail to Chicago and the Midwest. Noon—1 pm at AIA Chicago

11 Walter Burley Griffin, Prairie School architect and city planner, who designed the Australian capital with his wife (see Feb. 14), dies in 1937 in Lucknow, India.

14 Marion Mahony Griffin, an architect who worked in Frank Lloyd Wright's firm and later designed many projects with her husband (see Feb. 11) and on her own, born in 1871 in Chicago.



18 Tour Harley Ellis Devereaux's Design Excellence Award-winning interior for a fast-growing healthcare advertising agency, AbelsonTaylor. 5:30-7 pm at 33 W. Monroe St. Meet at the 6th floor's Red Balloon Café, an iconic space visible from the company's three floors.

21 Andrew Rebori, architect of distinctive structures on the Gold Coast and the Madonna della Strada chapel at Loyola University, born in 1886 in New York City.

28 Tour the Chicago Center for Green Technology, epicenter of sustainable planning, and learn about the many resources it has for architects and others in the design professions. 10:30 am-1:30 pm at 445 N. Sacramento Blvd, Chicago. Meet in the lobby at 10:20 am.

ONGOING

Cecil Balmond: Solid Void is a site-specific installation at the Graham Foundation's Madlener House. Balmond, whose Advanced Geometry Unit is part of Arup's London office, has suspended more than 6,000 aluminum plates from a rigid stainless steel chain in a labyrinthine form that runs throughout the first floor of the Prairie School mansion on the Gold Coast. Also on exhibit are videos and light boxes that explore Balmond's thoughts on the history of architecture.

Through Feb. 14 at Madlener House, 4 W. Burton Place, 11 am-6 pm, Wednesday through Saturday. www.graham-foundation.org



For details on events, go to websites noted or to www.aiachicago.org.

Master Planner highlights some of the most appealing activities on the two-month calendar. Many more events, programs and details are at www.aiachicago.org.

Know a useful or memorable date? Send information for Master Planner to CA@aiachicago.org.

DeStefano + Partners Wins AIA Chicago's Firm Award

In the same year that the firm celebrated its 20th anniversary, DeStefano + Partners took home the AIA Chicago 2008 Firm Award. This Chicago- and L.A.-based firm distinguished itself for consistently delivering superb design.

Awarded annually since 1991, AIA Chicago's Firm Award recognizes a firm's outstanding achievements, consistent excellence, and ongoing contributions to the advancement of the architectural profession. Jurors were three leaders of AIA New York: James McCullar, FAIA, Sherida Paulsen, FAIA, and Anthony Schirripa, AIA. They served or will serve as president of that chapter in 2008, 2009 and 2010, respectively.

James R. DeStefano, FAIA, a 1961 graduate of the Illinois Institute of Technology, developed his design and management chops at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill before founding DeStefano + Partners in 1988. It has since grown to more than 150 staff members, including 12 principals, with projects around the globe. The firm's design philosophy "[embraces] a modern esthetic expressed through proven, contemporary technology. In the best Chicago tradition, we respect 'the way things go together' and are proud of our high standards of craftsmanship, detailing and documentation," the firm wrote in its submission.

In addition to programmatically sensitive and modern design, the firm is equally committed to sustainability. Its team designed One South Dearborn to be Illinois' first LEED-certified (Silver) high-rise in the Core and Shell category. And before scrapping an old

building, the firm prefers to look at "regenerating" it by adapting the building's program, as it did for the McHugh Construction Corporate Headquarters—transforming a former auto dealership on Chicago's South Michigan Avenue into an airy and contemporary office space while repairing and retaining the building's landmarked masonry and timber façade.

The firm's residential projects in Chicago include the 838 W. Webster Residence, a Chicago townhome that sports a brick and painted metal exterior, and Residences at Riverbend, a 37-story residential building providing residents eastward views of the Chicago River and downtown. Commercial projects overseas include the 33-story, garden-laden, bullet-shaped Danang City Administration Center in Danang, Vietnam, and Seoul, Korea's iconic Post Tower. Local public projects include the multi-award-winning Illinois State Emergency Operations Center, a building noted for its perforated copper screens and layered limestone panels that enshroud a secured facility for employees responding to security threats.

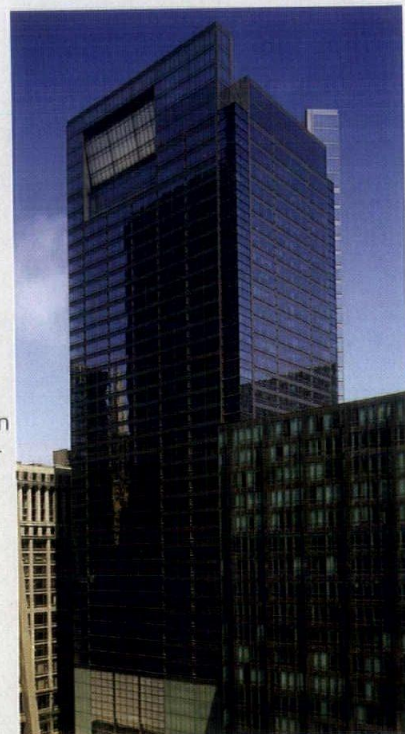
Jurors took note of the firm's high standards: "What we saw from DeStefano was a significant body of work that represents all the best our profession has to offer to the public it serves and to those who, together, create the built environment," Schirripa said.

"Their work exhibits a singular design vision for the firm's many and varied clients and their commissions," Paulsen added.

All jurors concurred that the projects show a high level of attention to design across the board, including technical detailing and the principles of sustainability.

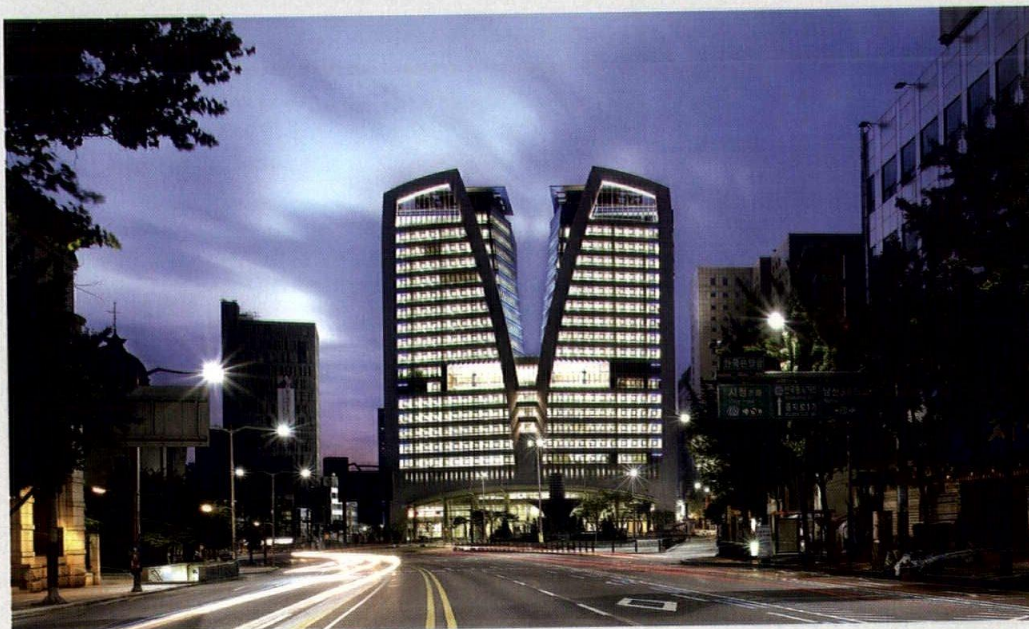
Scott Sarver, CEO at DeStefano + Partners, said he is grateful for the recognition, adding, "this award is especially meaningful to us as we celebrate the 20th anniversary of Jim DeStefano's founding of the firm. There's no greater honor than to be acknowledged by your peers."

DeStefano + Partners received the award Dec. 4 at the AIA Chicago Annual Meeting and Holiday Party at the Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.



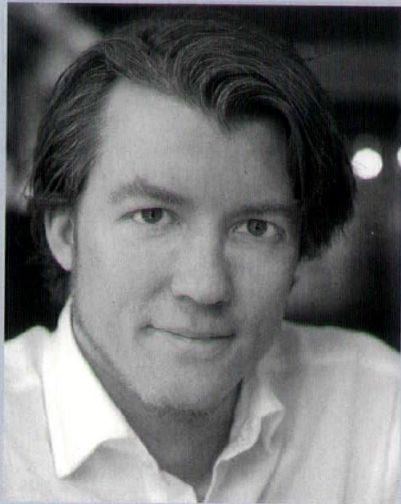
One South Dearborn

Photos courtesy of the firm



Post Tower, Seoul, South Korea

Craig Brandt Claims the 2008 Dubin Family Young Architect Award



Craig Brandt

From a field of eight applicants, Craig Brandt, AIA, was selected as the 2008 Dubin Family Young Architect. This distinction is awarded annually to an architect between the ages of 25 and 39 who demonstrates exceptional ability and has made significant contributions to the profession. The award includes a cash prize of \$2,000.

The AIA Chicago Foundation hosts the competition and administers the funds donated by the Dubin Family in honor of M. David Dubin, FAIA. The jurors were Sharlene Young, AIA, of Wheeler Kearns (a 2001 Dubin Family Young Architect Award winner); Ben Weese, FAIA, of Weese Langley Weese; and Walker Johnson, FAIA, of Johnson-Laskey.

Brandt, age 39, is a principal at Hammond Beeby Rupert Ainge, where he has worked since 1997. He earned his Masters of Architecture degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee,

where he now teaches architecture as an adjunct professor. Since 2004, he has served as chairman of the AIA Chicago Design Committee.

"He's able to embrace versatility," Young said about Brandt's capabilities. The jurors were impressed with both the diversity of Brandt's projects and their outstanding quality—as well as the critical role he played in delivering these projects. As project architect for the Chicago History Museum renovation (completed in 2006), he worked closely with firm partners Thomas Beeby, FAIA, and Gary Ainge, AIA. Brandt was also project architect for the firm's Harris Theater for Music and Dance in Chicago (2003). He served as project principal/project architect for Port of Entry (2005), a US Customs border station, in Raymond, Mont.

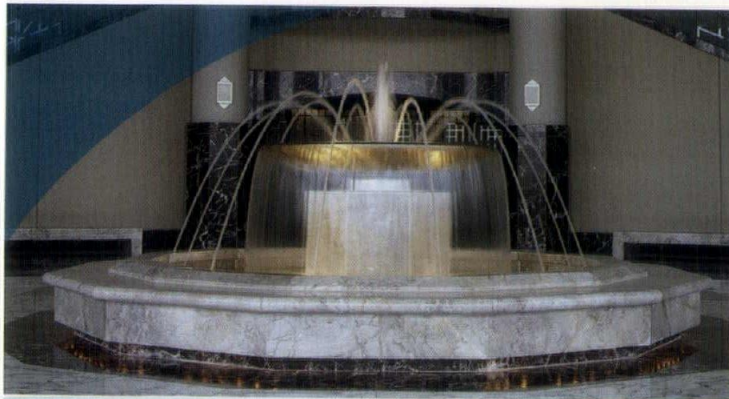
Brandt's submission portfolio included a letter written in 2004 from a satisfied client praising the project team's work on the Port of Entry project. "If you can please a client, you're a genius," Weese remarked.

Johnson noted that the candidates represented "future leaders of the profession" and commented that it was "a very hard decision."

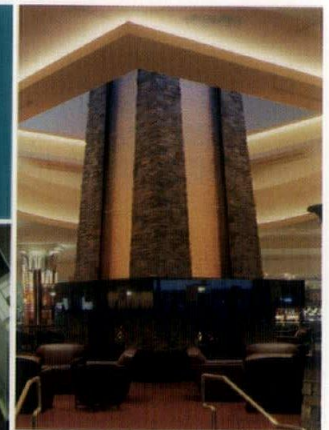
What does this recognition mean to the newest Young Architect Award winner? "It's a stimulating process to reflect on your past, present it to others, and have it make an impact," Brandt said. "My work [has been] individual as well as part of a team, so it's a tribute to others as well."

Brandt received the Dubin Family Young Architect Award Dec. 4 at the AIA Chicago Annual Meeting and Holiday Party at the Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.

To learn more about the AIA Chicago Foundation's annual awards program, visit the AIA Chicago Foundation web page at www.aiachicago.org/resources_for_architects/foundation.asp



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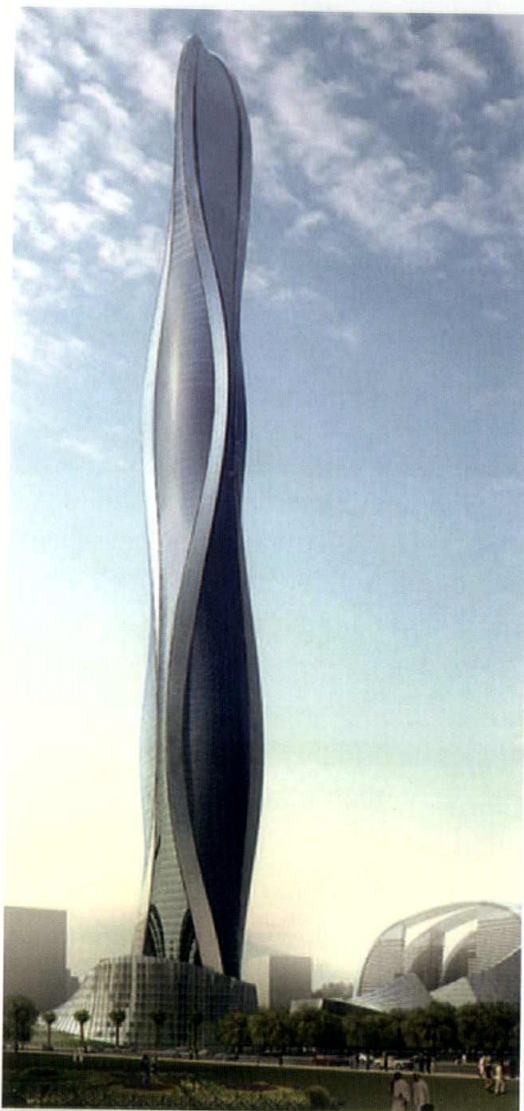


NATIONWIDE

A master development firm in Dubai commissioned **Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture** to design four new projects—with a combined cost of approximately \$15 billion—in Jumeira Gardens, a 12-year master planned development.

The towers, one of which will be a trio of supertall structures that are all at least 2,000 feet high, are to be designed to the very high environmental standards embraced by Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. His vision both on green innovations and on maintaining high aesthetic standards distinguish Dubai as a world leader, says firm principal Gordon Gill. The ruler's standards "will inspire a new surge of interest in sustainable architecture and building practices throughout the world," Gill says, "and we are thrilled to contribute to and be a part of that."

The master developer is Meraas Development. Collaborating with the firm on these projects are Environmental Systems Design, Halvorson & Partners, and Thornton Tomasetti.



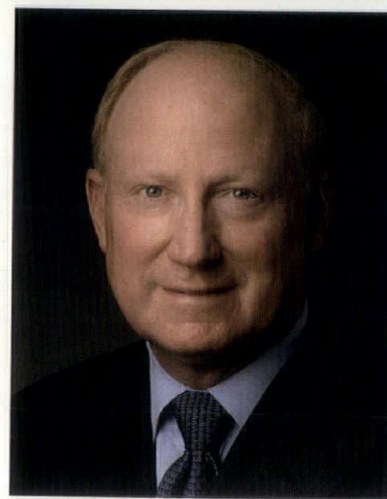
1 Park Ave.



1 Dubai

In October, all of HOK Chicago's 100-plus employees participated in a firm-wide service challenge by putting in a full workday sprucing up a park in the city's Lawndale neighborhood. The HOK Chicago staffers mulched trees, repaired bleachers, created murals and performed other tasks at Franklin Park. The day came about as the result of a challenge by HOK headquarters that each of its 26 offices dedicate one day to helping out in their communities.

Thomas K. Fridstein, FAIA, signed on at Perkins Eastman as a principal, with responsibilities in Chicago and New York City. In Chicago, he is the managing principal. Fridstein had been a principal at RMJM Hillier; before RMJM and Hillier merged, he was the latter firm's CEO. Fridstein is on the steering committee of the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitats.



Thomas K. Fridstein



The first school in the nation designed expressly to serve children with autism is under construction near Chicago's Medical District. **Solomon Cordwell Buenz** designed the \$32 million **Easter Seals Therapeutic School and Center for Autism Research**, which includes a 45,000-square-foot day school for 150 children, research space and a baseball field. Ultimately, the complex will also have two residential buildings, a gymnasium and a pool.

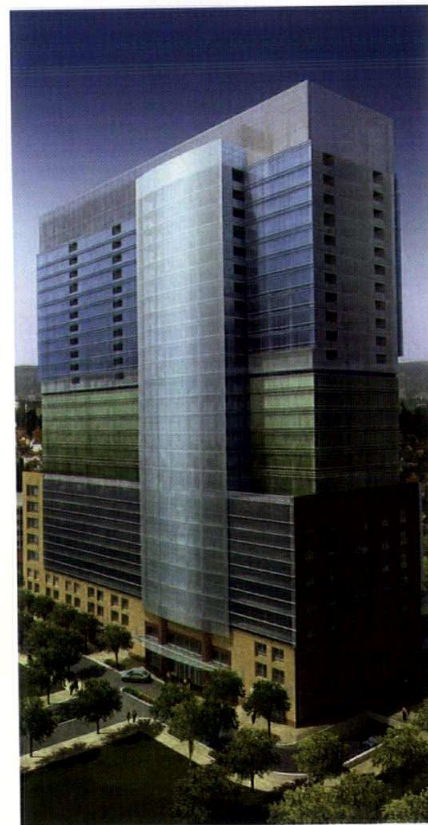
Some of the teamwork at Lucien Lagrange Architects

is now being performed by a real live team—of soccer players. The client on LLA's Sigma Tower, in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, also owns that city's soccer team, so the athletes now play in jerseys with "Sigma Tower" emblazoned on their jerseys.

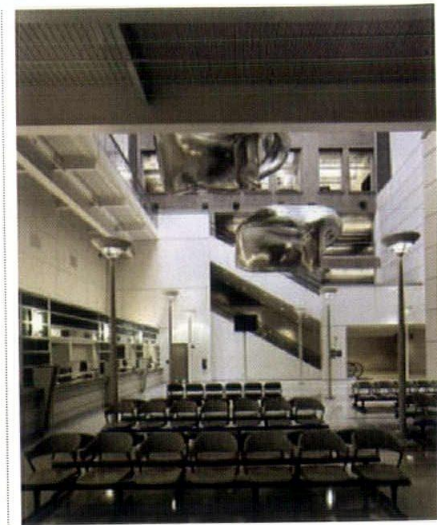
The 26-story **Sigma Tower**, which broke ground in October, will house a high-end hotel, condominiums and office space. It is one of two towers planned for a hillside site in the historic and fast-growing city, Romania's third largest.

Elsewhere in Europe, LLA has completed designs for **Isola Lagrange**, a residential component of the 3.2-million-square-foot **Porta Nuova** development. Working with **Hines Italy**, LLA designed a combination of townhouses, condos and affordable apartments whose sustainable features surpass Milan's stringent new green-design code by 30 percent. The green features include storm water reuse, heat recovery, solar hot water, and a passive solar strategy.

LLA also recently completed its first luxury condominium development in Manhattan, the 24 residences at 535 W. East End Ave.



Sigma Tower

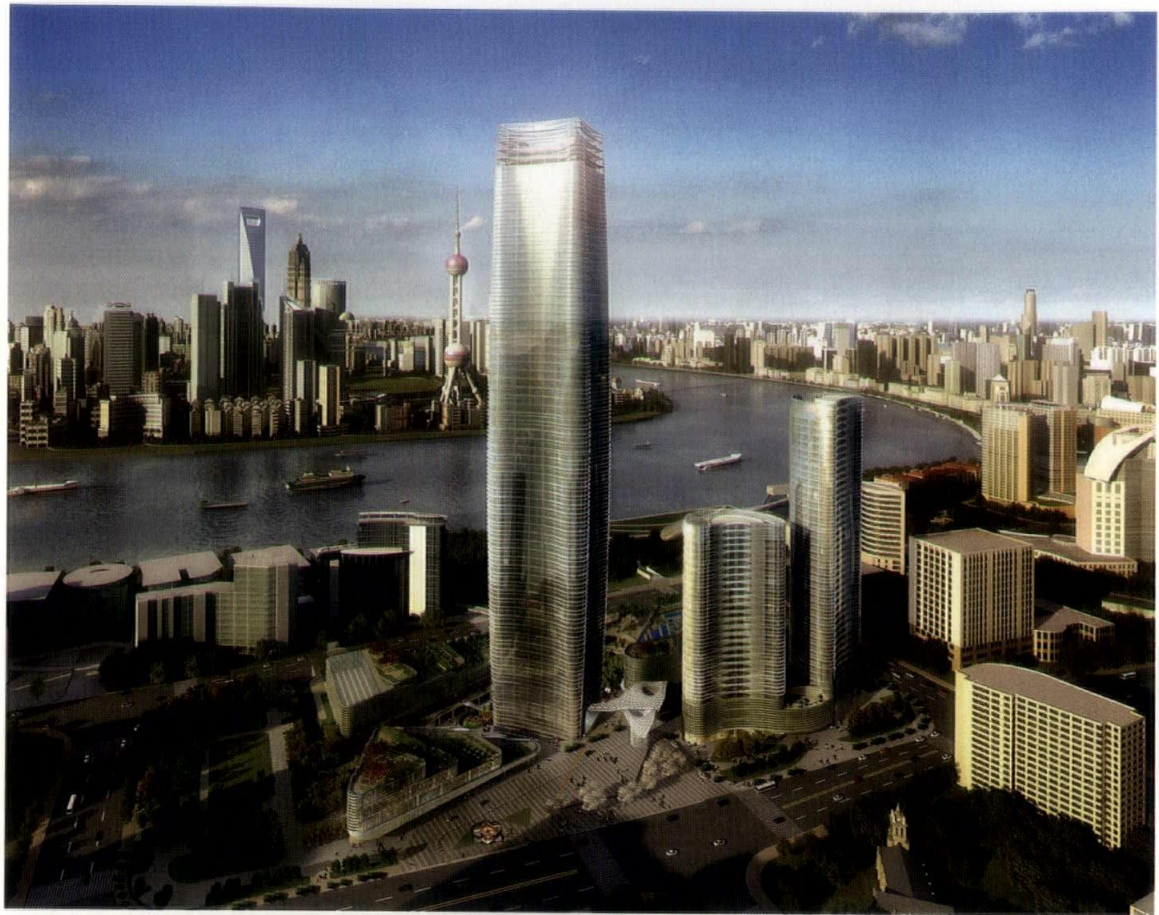


The dramatic renovation of a tired old federal building in the South Loop is not only a visual treat but, now, **LEED for Commercial Interiors** certified. The 240,000-square-foot renovation at 536 S. Clark St., completed in March 2007, was the effort of a joint venture called **Clark Street Design Group**; its participants were **HDR**, **Syska Hennessy Group**, and **Neumann/Smith Architecture**.

Jim Lyman, project manager for HDR, notes that the client, the U.S. General Services Administration, requires that any new building or significant renovation become **LEED** certified. "Their commitment to sustainable solutions greatly assisted the design team in clearing the hurdles to certification," Lyman says.

The structure dates to 1911, and has been owned by the federal government since 1952. Renovating it sustainably entailed, among other things, installing an underfloor air distribution system. Removing 1950s drop ceilings provided more space for the requisite raised floors and revealed the full-height windows that now let far more daylight into the space.

SOM announced the groundbreaking of **White Magnolia Plaza** in Shanghai, China. The project contains a 320-meter office tower, two hotels and several smaller mixed-use buildings in a neighborhood redevelopment project connected to a riverfront park. Initially, the project was to include five towers, but SOM's final design reduced it to three: two crescent-shaped and the third, tallest building a curvaceous centerpiece. The sleek curved surfaces of the building were designed and engineered with software used by the aerospace industry, resulting in an efficient and graceful profile.



At the Chicago office of Thornton Tomasetti, four people recently stepped up to new positions.

→ Both **Carol Post** and **Thomas Poulos** are now senior vice president/principal. Post, the Chicago office's higher education market sector leader, is at work on projects for Northwestern University, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and the University of Chicago. Poulos, the firm's aviation sector leader, has a portfolio that includes projects at O'Hare and airports in Memphis, Detroit and Indianapolis, among others.

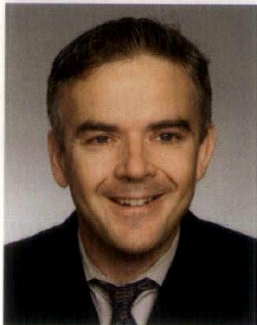
→ **Garret Browne** and **David Weihing** are now vice presidents. Browne led the foundation design for the deep basements of Block 37 and the Chicago Spire. Weihing is leading the structural project team for Bank of America Center in Charlotte, N.C.



Carol Post



Thomas Poulos



Garret Browne



David Weihing

Tom Behles, AIA, retired from **Legat Architects**, where he was a principal and had led construction administration and management services for 22 years.

Also at Legat, **Jeremy Cordell, Assoc. AIA**, joined the Chicago studio as an intern, and **Peter Doherty** is in the same location, as proposal coordinator. **Dennis Kluge** and **Daniel Jimenez** volunteered to revivify two classrooms at CPS high schools with a new floor plan that integrated donated casework, desks and projection technology, as well as a palette of fresh finishes.



Angie Lee



Kenneth Novak

SmithGroup elected Angie Lee, FAIA, to its board of directors. Lee is a vice president at the firm and leads the workplace studio at its Chicago office. The firm also hired **Kenneth Novak** as project manager and associate for the workplace studio. He came from Jones Lang LaSalle, where he had been vice president of design and construction consulting services.



A. Epstein and Sons International has gone the way of Oprah and Madonna, using just one name, Epstein. Employee-owned since 2005, they made the change to signal that it is no longer a family concern—as well as to acknowledge that in the marketplace it is commonly called Epstein.

Also coming under the Epstein banner are units that had gone by their own brand names: annex|5, Interior Space International (ISI) and neXt wayfinding + design.

Epstein employees have also formed the Epstein Community Foundation, an initiative that will work with community groups to improve schools, safety and sustainability. The foundation's first big project is a partnership with McNair Academy in the city's South Austin neighborhood. Epstein staffers hosted McNair students at the firm's offices for a summer program in design engineering and construction techniques; and led architectural field trips. Other aspects of the project include acting as reading role models, acting on students' letters to Santa, and donating school supplies. Future plans include improvements to the school's playground, bathrooms, and information technology.



Frank Heitzman

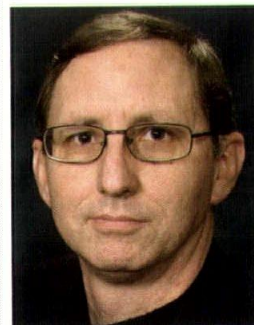
The Illinois Association of Historic Preservation Commissions has elected Frank Heitzman, AIA, its vice president. Heitzman, a professor of architecture at Triton College in River Grove, is the founding principal of the Oak Park firm Heitzman Architects, which specializes in preservation and restoration work, and on integrating accessibility in historic structures and sites. He is the convener of the Oak Park Preservation Association and president of the Pleasant Home Foundation.

The National Association of Home Builders bestowed a silver award on Norwood Crossing,

a senior living development in the city's Norwood Park neighborhood designed by Harley Ellis Devereaux, in NAHB's Best of 50+ Housing awards.

Working with Norwood Life Society, the firm is replacing most of the structures at the former Norwood Park Home, which dates to 1909, and creating homes for seniors with various levels of need. The 4.5-acre compound includes 139 independent living units in two- and four-story buildings, and a four-story assisted living building that includes a pair of "memory support" households for 10 residents each.

Also part of the phased redevelopment plan is a modernization of the complex's skilled nursing center, and a Town Center that includes concierge services, wellness and recreation areas, and dining options. Much of the new design draws its inspiration from the handsome Victorian homes that characterize the surrounding neighborhood.



Christopher Thomas

Christopher Thomas, AIA, is now a principal at **DLR Group**. Thomas leads the design of retail and mixed-use projects for the firm. He is one of seven people elevated to principal last fall at DLR's offices around the country.

Also, DLR is pursuing LEED certification for the city of Chicago's new **Engine Co. 121** fire station at 1724 W. 95th St.; built to replace a 1914 firehouse, this will be the city's first LEED-certified firehouse.



Eckenhoff Saunders Architects, now celebrating 25 years in business, adapted the suburb-friendly big box shopping area for a tight city site for Southgate Market in the South Loop. At the 900,000-square-foot, \$55 million project, anchored by a Whole Foods Market, the traditional urban foot traffic is not made subservient to car traffic; broad walkways give pedestrians a chance to wander among the landscaped areas and the storefronts, while cars and trucks circulate separate from them.

The project centers on a glass elevator core that provides a strong vertical element and helps bridge the gap between the high-rise office neighborhood to the north and the low- and mid-rise residential sections of the South Loop. Architect Walt Eckenhoff, AIA, studiously knitted the project into the urban surroundings with such features as a suspended bridge on the east side of the project that reflects Chicago's tradition of river bridges.

The project's sustainable features include energy-efficient HVAC, insulated fritted glass that reduces solar heat gain, semi-permeable paving that reduces storm water runoff, and a rainwater-collecting cistern that releases into the landscape irrigation system.

Northwestern University tapped Goettsch Partners

to design a new building for its **Bienen School of Music**.

The project is intended to achieve LEED Silver certification at minimum, and is scheduled to begin construction in 2010, with completion two years later. It will have a premier site on the southern end of Northwestern's lakefront campus, with views south to the Chicago skyline. The university committee that selected Goettsch at the end of a four-month search said that the firm's design maximizes those views and will provide an iconic structure for the music school.

The Women's Architectural League Foundation awarded six \$1,000 scholarships to students at Illinois universities. The 2008 recipients are: Hector Hernandez and Marisa Zambuto at the University of Illinois-Champaign/Urbana; Eliza Bober and Camille Yu at the Illinois Institute of Technology; and Catrina Knapczyk and Eric Ziegler at the University of Illinois-Chicago. The league hosts architectural tours and events each year to fund the scholarships.



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SUBTRACTION = ADDITION

At Ronan's Yale Steam Laundry project, less means more

Scottish novelist and poet Robert Louis Stevenson once said, "There is but one art—to omit." John Ronan, AIA, has been applying this same philosophy since establishing his Chicago practice, John Ronan Architects, in 1997. Editing, according to Ronan, is a way to achieve greater clarity in the design response.

"It's easy to over-design, but applying more 'stuff' or more architecture isn't the answer," Ronan says, "and more often it becomes a distraction." His work looks to simplify the architecture, to take away the unnecessary, and distill the important ideas in each project. "I look to see what I can subtract to make the building or space more poignant," he says.

That's just what he did for the recently completed 38,000-square-foot

Yale Steam Laundry renovation project in Washington, DC. The project converted a dormant commercial laundry facility (that had at one time laundered the linens for the White House) into residential loft condominiums and public amenities.

The three-story structure had beautiful glazed brick throughout the interior and interesting wood ceilings with exposed joists and industrial dunnage on the roof. The design team went to extremes to save the visual history so that the building's original intent and historic legacy should not be erased. They accomplished this by establishing a standard of practice that if the flaw didn't compromise the structural integrity or safety of the building, it was preserved.

To accommodate the new program, Ronan and his team designed a series of discrete insertions—a glass and steel bridge, plate steel stairs, and steel walls—that both visually and physically stand free, setting them apart from the existing white glazed-brick structure. Now, old and new coexist and the insertions establish a dialog between the two.

The success of this strategy is that each insertion becomes an opportunity to clearly define the points of connection in the building and is visually understood as a system of linking the individual functions of the complex.

"It's the relationship between spaces that are important," says Ronan, citing the connection between the first floor lobby and the second floor gym, as an example. "When you walk in the front door and hear the billiard balls cracking up above," he notes, "the permeability makes the space more flexible and interesting."

→ **Cindy Coleman**

Photos courtesy of the firm



The steel-and-glass stair and bridge connect the original structure to a 1930 annex.



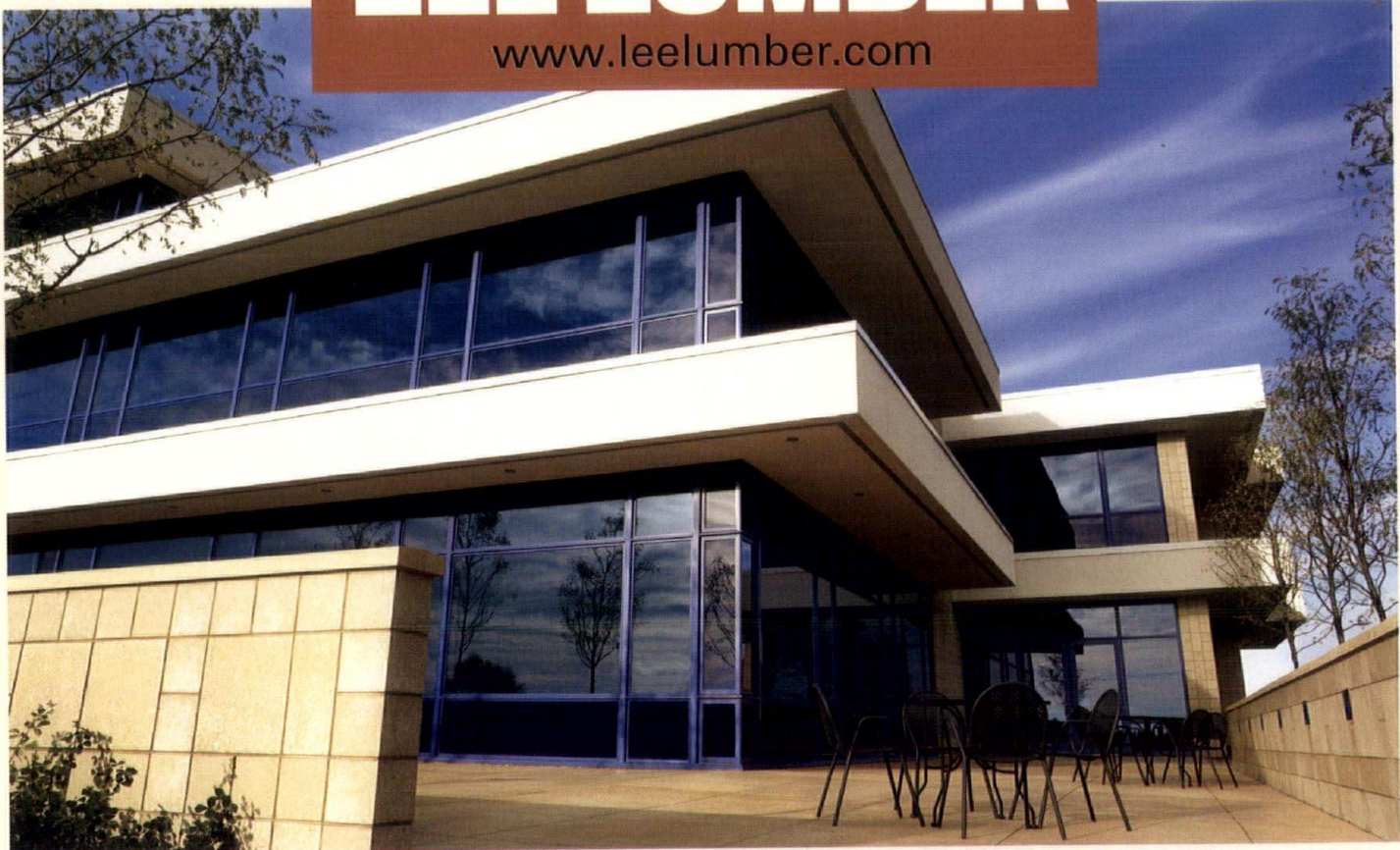
Adjacent spaces in the project are visually and physically open to one another. Here, a glass insertion acts as a bridge to the public amenities—a game room and exercise room—that are semi-enclosed.

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ern MARRIAGE

david hovey weds the roles of architect and developer

by Laurie Petersen

The trio of buildings forms one of the most prominent landmarks on the Edens Expressway in the north suburbs, rising in a series of shape-shifting glass walls from the bend of a sharp curve. But the approach from the local road on the project's western flank reveals a courtyard and an adjacent forest preserve that suddenly makes sense of the name: Optima Old Orchard Woods. Like the condo project itself, the architect-developer has both a well-known image and a more private, equally compelling story.

The outline of the history of David Hovey's firm, Optima, is familiar to many of his fellow architects. He founded the company to control every step of the development process, from land acquisition through design and construction, even landscaping and building management. The company's buildings are in downtowns throughout the North Shore and have shaped the skyline of Evanston. Hovey's uncompromisingly modern housing, especially his luxurious single-family dwellings in Winnetka and Arizona, has garnered numerous design awards.

The details of the company's history are just as notable. David Hovey, FAIA, started Optima in 1978 with just \$15,000. His wife, Eileen, has worked for the company since the beginning, and Hovey credits her with 95 percent of its success. He does not accept outside clients, even refusing to sell a speculative house until it was finished to his own satisfaction. He chose Arizona as the location for another office not because he vacationed there but because it offered the best housing market and the desert landscape would challenge him creatively. He has no intention of leaving the Chicago market: in October, Hovey announced plans for a 50-story apartment tower in Streeterville. Construction is expected to start in 2011.

Optima Old Orchard Woods (photos at left & right) is a bold exercise in solid and void that towers over a sweep of forest preserve on one side, the Edens Expressway on the other.





The pairing of glass walls and green roofs creates a rhythmic interplay of indoors and out.

It is only a slight exaggeration to say that Optima began on a blind date. On that night 33 years ago, Eileen foresaw that her date's vision for an architect-led development company could become a reality only if she were involved: she is as ebullient as he is reserved. She got a real estate broker's license in order to sell the six townhouses that were the firm's first project. Built on urban renewal land in Hyde Park, the units sold out in six months in spite of that era's skyrocketing mortgage rates. "The banker said it was the only time he had seen clients bring flowers to the broker instead of the other way around," David Hovey recalls.

Since then, Eileen's marketing savvy has informed the development of all the firm's projects. She is also a staunch supporter of modernism, both in architecture and in the art the couple collects ("our taste is identical"—David). Most importantly, he says, "each time we've come to a point in the road where we can be more conservative or more bold, Eileen always goes for bold."

In our current era of *Dwell* magazine, it is easy to forget how gutsy it was to sell orthodox modernism to the mainstream in the Po-Mo 1980s and 90s. Optima's developments were ahead of their time in several other ways too. The open floor plans were an adaptation of those found in urban lofts, with kitchen, living and dining spaces defined by cabinets and furnishings in lieu of walls. Parking was hidden behind storefronts or under landscaped berms. Sliding doors opened to terraces large enough to accommodate trees that provided green views for adjacent units as well.

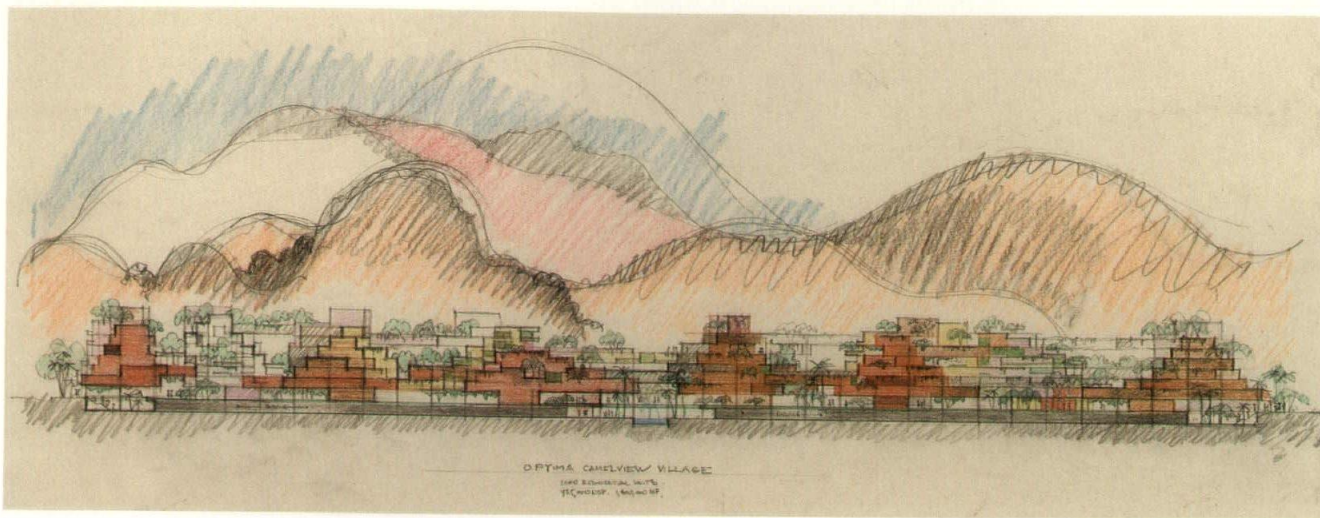
In addition to believing that people would want to live in modern buildings, the Hoveys believed that North Shore residents would choose to live in dense, mixed-use developments in the heart of existing suburban downtowns or on abandoned light-industrial sites. Rather than building on exurban greenfields, the company became known for its ability to develop in-town sites that had been considered unbuildable by most developers.

A 1988 project in the center of Highland Park was a key piece of downtown revitalization, offering residential and public parking in a complex of offices, shops and condominiums. A mid-80s project in the town had Optima's first use of landscaped roofs, in this case to cover underground parking. Two condominium projects on busy streets in Wilmette have first-floor retail and office space wrapping around public parking, with residents' cars below grade. Large, abandoned industrial sites in Deerfield and Northfield were developed with townhouses and low-rise condominiums where abundant landscaping and red brick walls create a more pastoral feeling.



Eileen's marketing savvy has informed the development of all the firm's projects. She is also a staunch supporter of modernism, both in architecture and in the art the couple collects.

After two decades of suburban work, Optima returned to its South Side roots to tackle the most challenging site yet: on South Michigan Avenue, across the street from the Illinois Institute of Technology, where Hovey got his degree and still teaches. Both the location and the restrictions of the landowner (IIT) dictated a very economical building, but Hovey wanted a steel-and-glass aesthetic for this high-visibility environment. Taking full advantage of the company's design-build capability, Hovey and his team developed a new cladding system. Standard-size glass panels are fitted into aluminum channels that attach to the concrete slab. Because the flat-plate concrete structure is completely concealed behind the



Optima brought its own model of urban condominiums to fill an empty niche in the Phoenix market. Optima Biltmore Towers was the first project, and the combination of harsh desert climate and higher selling prices encouraged Hovey to explore energy-conscious measures that were beyond the scope of his Chicago-area work. Optima Camelview Village extends these measures even further

Camelview will be LEED-certified, although Hovey readily points out aspects of his work that go against the grain.

and is a summation of almost every feature for which Optima is known. The green roofs are so extensive that they provide 17 acres of landscaping on the 13-acre site. Much of the grade-level green space is accessible to the public, and the primary axis serves as an extension of the pedestrian way through Scottsdale's Old Town business district. Sections of the penthouse roofs have integrated photovoltaics that power some of the common areas.

Camelview will be LEED-certified, although Hovey readily points out aspects of his work that go against the grain. Optima's emphasis on prefabrication, for instance, minimizes site labor and at present relies on transportation of components from the Far East. Nonetheless, Hovey was recently the keynote speaker at a Stanford University conference on sustainable building, having been recruited by the university's president after a visit to the Camelview project.

Back on the homefront, Hovey sees Optima Old Orchard Woods as "the culmination of several years of investigations in different directions." The prefabricated elements, the use of glass and metal, the recessed balconies and vast green terraces, the sense of community created by arranging the buildings around a grand entry court, all reflect the company's design philosophy.

And Eileen's marketing expertise is, as always, an important element. With over 65 different floor plans for the 665 units, and views that are completely different on the forest and on the city sides, the building offers a wider variety of choices than anything else on the market. That variety is expressed visually, with Hovey extolling the play of light and shadow created by the massing and voids. He notes that "it is not a one-sided building," that it appears different from all the varied approaches.

The same could be said of the company itself, which has many more dimensions than are apparent at first glance. CA

Laurie Petersen is the associate editor of the AIA Guide to Chicago.

With his Arizona projects, Hovey can weave together the built and natural environments more fully than in Chicago. At Optima Biltmore Towers (this photo), abundant green roofs make the structure feel like a living thing. A drawing of his Camelview project (top) shows how the buildings are massed to mimic the nearby mountains.



Residents of Optima Old Orchard Woods will swim amidst the treetops (above). At Hovey's North Shore home (left), balconies and a catwalk attach the enclosed interior to the world outside.

glass, the tolerances required are much less precise than on an exposed concrete frame, saving significantly on construction costs. The result is a high-performance, thermally broken curtain wall that costs just over half of a commercially manufactured one.

Although being his own client allowed Hovey to develop a distinctive architectural vocabulary in Chicago and for his Evanston high rises, other municipalities were not so accommodating. With projects in

some northern suburbs posing design constraints, and having completed his own house as a showcase of prefabrication and industrial building materials and techniques, Hovey developed a creative restlessness that led him to look farther afield. Since the Chicago metro area was experiencing flat job growth, he began traveling to other states, finally settling on the Phoenix area.

He began by developing single-family homes in a planned community north of Scottsdale. He purchased four lots to develop sequentially, each house to serve as a laboratory for his explorations of prefabrication, visual and spatial relationships between interior and exterior, and energy efficiency. When an interested buyer made an offer on one of the houses mid-construction, Hovey refused to sell because he did not want any design interference. "I do not have the temperament to deal with clients," he says.

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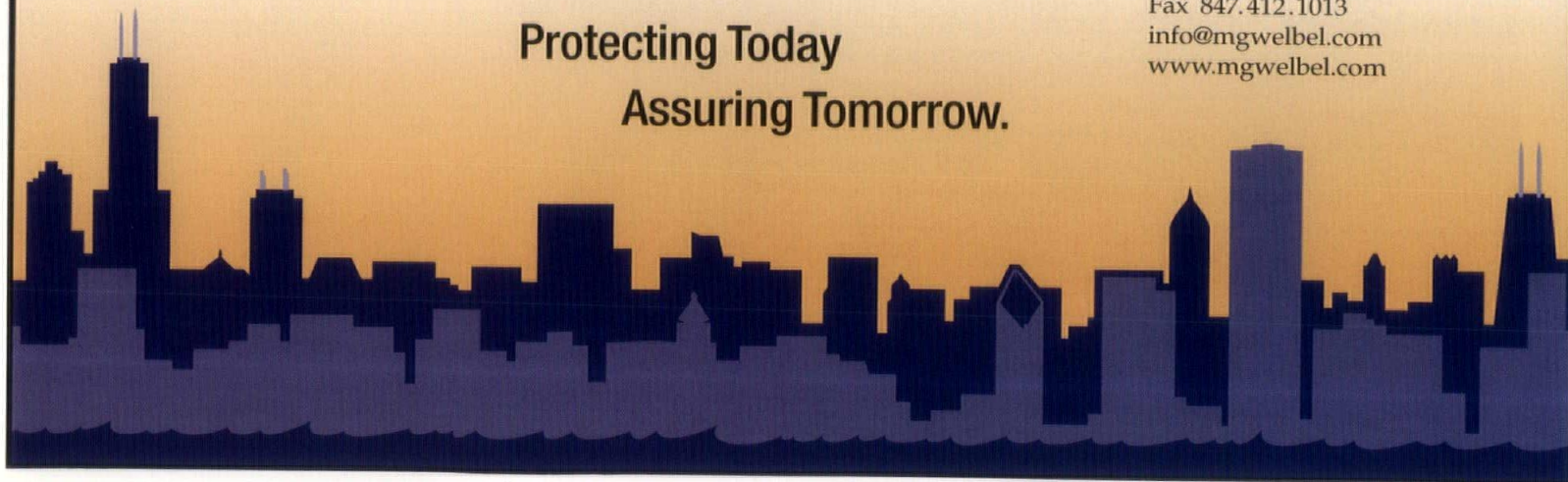
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Designed for his aging mother, the architect's Glade House has a rural feel that consciously evokes an unpretentious past in Lake Forest. It stands in a setting that appears remote but is in fact neighbors with sizable mansions, some of them built for previous generations of Phillips's own family. The living room (photo on facing page) opens lavishly to its wooded surroundings.

Real Simple

Rick Phillips crafts contemporary houses that look back to traditional forms

By Lee Bey



Glade House photos by Barbara Karant

The Glade House, located near Green Bay Road in Lake Forest, is austere enough by North Shore standards to invite a double-take. With its primarily cedar exterior and simple, angular lines, the 21st century home resembles a farmhouse raised on stilts above the landscape.

And at 3,000 square feet, the home barely qualifies as a foyer in some corners of Lake Forest. Curbside architecture critics in the town have called the informal wood frame home a "bird house."

But the home's architect, Rick Phillips, FAIA, says the house takes its design cues from the vacation homes and country houses that were built in the suburb's earlier days, which he says makes the home more authentically Lake Forest than the gargantuan and architecturally fussy revivalist homes that have predominated for decades now.

"To me it was about the Lake Forest that originally existed—before the Lake Forest became this community where image started to become more important than the actual experience of living," Phillips says. The idea of Lake Forest "as it used to be" informs the work of the 62-year-old architect, who owns Frederick Phillips & Associates, a five-person firm on Chicago's Near North Side. Phillips's desire for simplicity and authenticity has pushed him to design buildings where materials are honestly used and the landscape is respected.

Phillips grew up in Lake Forest; his stepfather was architect Edward Bennett Jr.—son of the famed Edward Bennett who collaborated with Daniel Burnham on the Chicago Plan of 1909. Phillips's maternal grandfather David Jones hired Henry Ives Cobb and Frederick Law Olmsted in 1895 to design a Lake Forest home and landscape. The parcels of that land remained in the family; Phillips was raised in a 9,000-square-foot former barn on the property that was renovated into a house by his stepfather; as a teenager, Phillips worked on drawings for the home, called Pembroke Barn. "It was such a beautiful undertaking on my stepfather's part," Phillips says. "It was really the best thing [he] ever did."

There were other architectural influences for Phillips. At the University of Pennsylvania he studied under Louis Khan. He later apprenticed with Harry Weese in 1974 and 1975 before starting his own practice in 1976.

“To me it was about the Lake Forest that originally existed—before Lake Forest became this community where images started to become more important than the actual experience of living.”

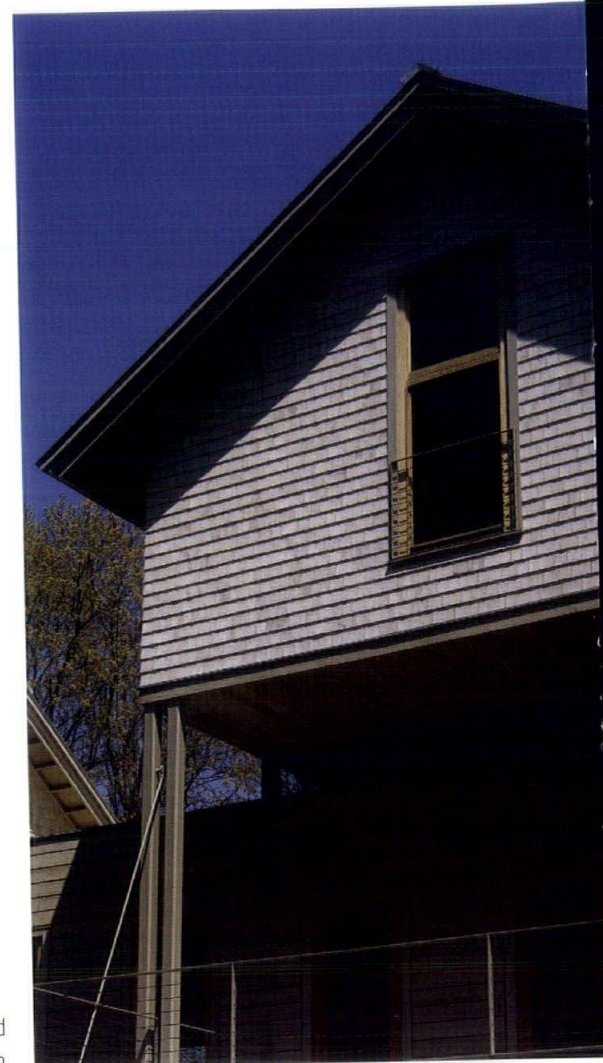
In the early 2000s, Phillips designed Glade House on a portion of the Olmsted-designed landscape where he was raised; it was a gift to his elderly mother, Katherine Bennett, who was Jones's daughter. The two-story Glade House was designed for the needs of his mother, who by the time the home was completed in 2005 had passed her 80th birthday. A single bedroom, living room, dining room, kitchen, bathroom and deck are all on the second floor—essentially a raised first floor—accessed by an elevator in the ground-level foyer. A pair of guest bedrooms sit above the second floor beneath a gable roof. Generous windows open views onto the Olmsted landscape. Clerestory glass brings more natural light into the house.

Though the home draws its inspiration from farm vernacular, it and Phillips's other projects are quite contemporary.

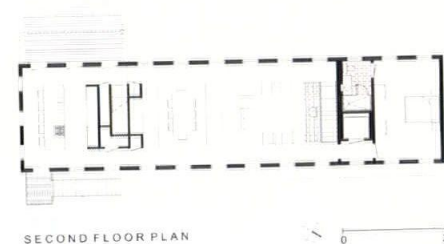
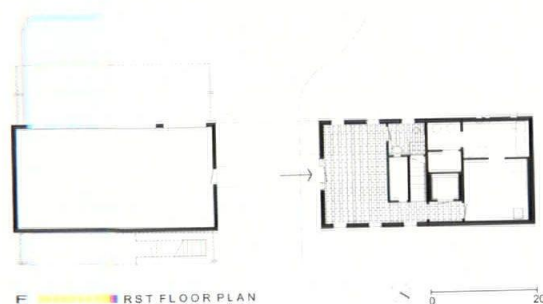
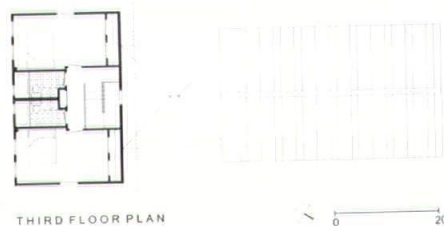
“His architecture is rooted in traditional American building, particularly rural vernacular stuff, and yet it's completely brought up to the present,” says landscape architect Stephen Christy, who has known Phillips for more than 20 years and worked with him on the Glade House.

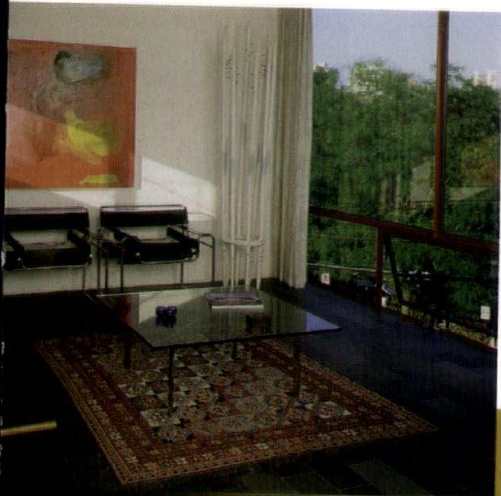
“He draws his inspiration from work that was never meant to make an architectural statement,” Christy says.

When it came to siting the house in relation to the much larger Pembroke Barn, Phillips looked to Ragdale, Howard Van Doren Shaw's Arts & Crafts Lake Forest masterpiece, for inspiration. There, less than a mile north of the Glade House site, Shaw placed a small brick farmhouse close to the road, while the larger mansion loomed behind it. “I thought the juxtaposition of these two houses were similar to Pembroke and the Glade House,” he says. “The house closest to the road was much simpler, more informal and much more agrarian in

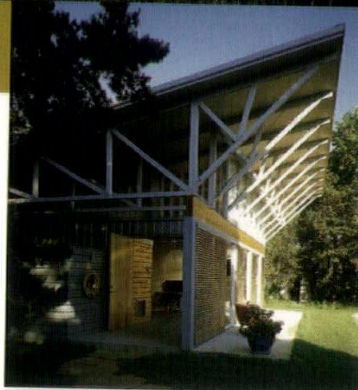
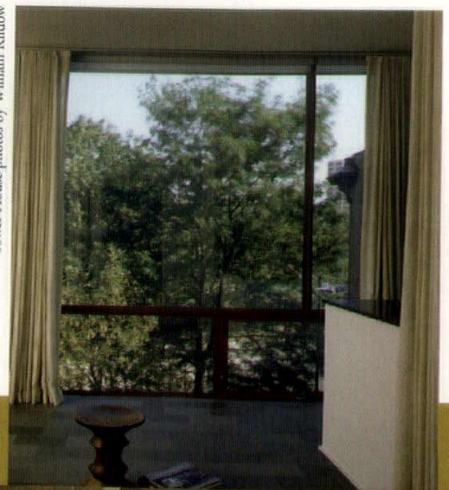


The stacking of Glade House (above) results directly from the program: An aging resident would want to live as much as possible on one main floor (second floor plan below), and elevating it would enhance views of the natural setting. Entry would be sheltered on the first floor, along with a caretaker's apartment; accommodations for guests would be on the highest perch, the turned third floor.





Tower House photos by William Kildow



Sawyer Studio photos by Gregory Murphy



In two other projects, Tower House (upper row of photos) and Sawyer Studio (lower row), Phillips has pursued the relationship of inside to out. Tower House, near the old Cabrini-Green, shields itself from prying eyes and puts the kitchen and living spaces on upper floors, to capture views and to facilitate use of the rooftop deck. Sawyer Studio opens on many sides to become a seamless part of its spacious setting.

feel. It was meant to defer to the larger, grander structure.”

Glade House would also provide a smaller, more livable alternative for Phillips’s mother, who in her late seventies still lived in Pembroke Barn. But Katherine Bennett’s health began failing just as the house was being finished. “About a year or six months before it was completed my brother and I made the decision [that] instead of moving her into the house, we’d move her closer to the city because her health was declining,” Phillips says. “We decided to complete the house and put it on the market.”

Because the house is much smaller than zoning on the 8,000-square-foot parcel allowed, developers were interested in demolishing the home and building a larger one on the site. “Initially, I took my ego out of the whole thing and thought, ‘if that’s where the market is, why not?’” Phillips says. He and the family thought about dismantling the house and the materials, rather than to see them fall to the bulldozer. But in the end, they decided to work to preserve the house, he says.

“We got to thinking and talking about it as a family,” Phillips says. “We realized the house was really part of the legacy of the property and the legacy of the family. And even if

my mother hadn’t occupied it, she was part of why it got built.”

The family then put a restrictive covenant on the property that forbade demolition but allowed additions. But the house was still a tough sell. It wasn’t a typical Lake Forest home. And the insults over the home’s looks didn’t help either.

“People call it the ‘bird house’ and the ‘tree house’ because they’ve gotten used to all the schlock that’s been put up [in Lake Forest],” Christy says.

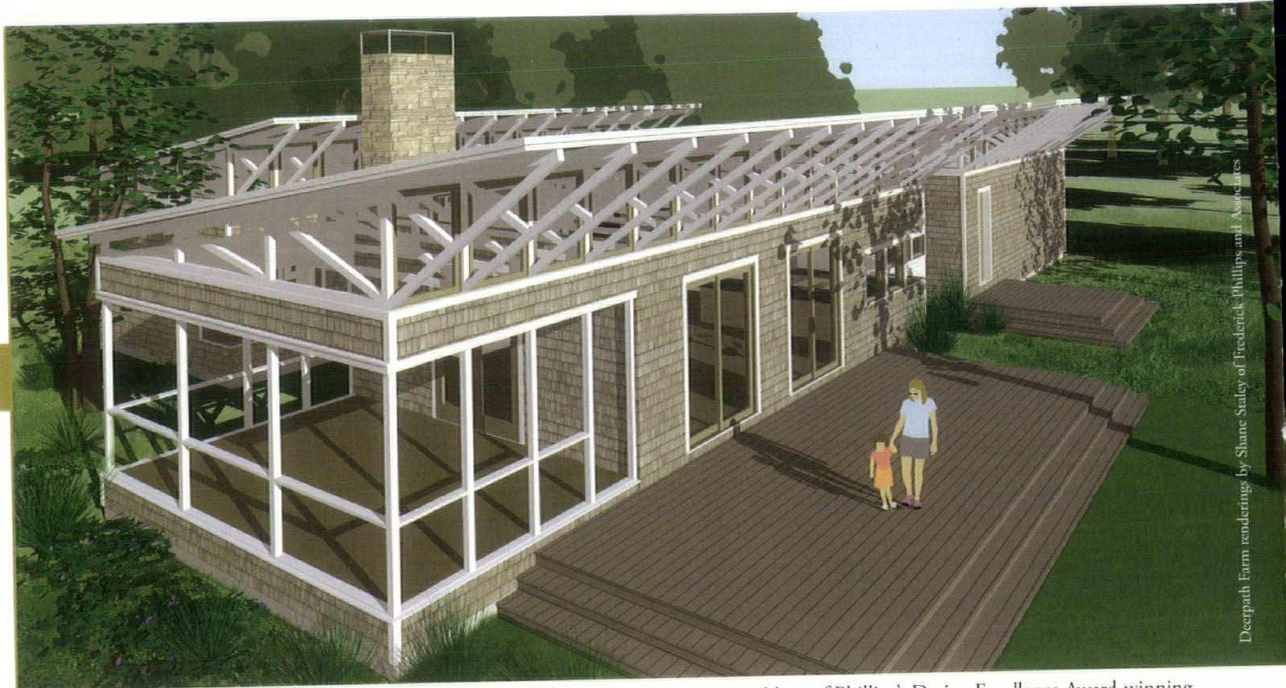
A break in the clouds came in March 2008 when a buyer surfaced.

“They recognized what it was,” Phillips says. “I think what they saw was something unpretentious and full of natural light and ventilation; a very rich living experience in a small, less spacious accommodation.”

The new family hired Phillips to design an addition that would include a master bedroom on the raised main level, with a playroom and garage space below.

The home’s current master bedroom would become a library or fourth bedroom. “It’ll turn into a really good family house,” Phillips says. Lake Forest officials have approved the plans and “it’s ready to go as soon as they decide to do it,” he says.

“We’re discouraging formal architectural styles such as Neo-Georgian. Houses can be as comfortable and grand as they want to be, but they don’t have to pretend to be anything they are not.”



Deerpath Farm renderings by Shane Staley of Frederick Phillips and Associates

The shed roof and roof trusses of this design for a house at Deerpath Farm make it a sibling of Phillips’s Design Excellence Award-winning Sawyer Studio. Its openness weaves together the structure and the surroundings.

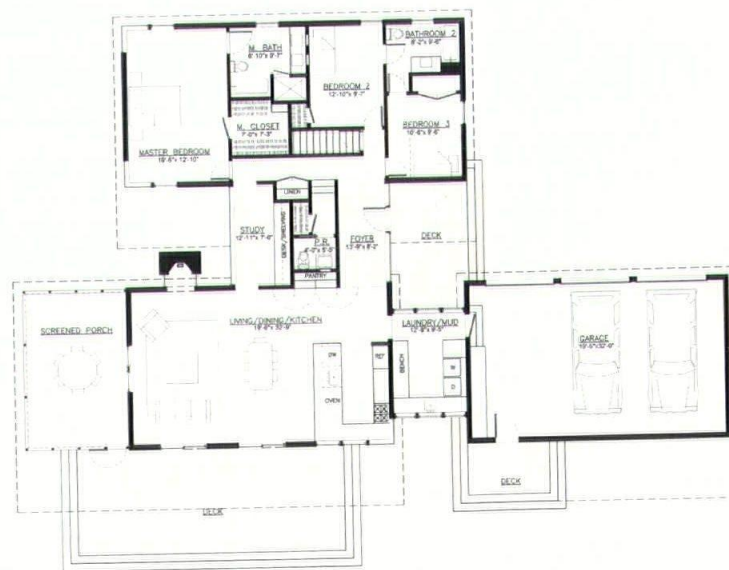
Until then, Phillips has other projects keeping him and his firm occupied, including the development of Deerpath Farm, a conservation-friendly subdivision on an old dairy farm owned by the Bennett family in neighboring Mettawa. When completed, the 200-acre Deerpath Farm will have roughly 40 single-family homes of varying sizes. Rather than subdividing the acreage into five-acre lots and letting builders have at it, the master plan preserves two-thirds of the area’s open space while design guidelines encourage the preservation of old growth hickory trees on individual lots. Buyers are free to hire their own architects to design their homes, but the character of the dwellings will be regulated by a book of architectural guidelines

and a design review committee. Phillips says the committee will encourage the use of materials that are “reflective of the informal country setting” where Deerpath is located.

“We are discouraging formal architectural styles such as Neo-Georgian,” he says. “From a stylistic standpoint, we are discouraging any pretention whatsoever. Houses can be as comfortable and grand as they want to be, but they don’t have to pretend to be anything they are not.”

Which can also be said of the architecture that Phillips practices. **CA**

Lee Bey is the former architecture critic for the Chicago Sun-Times.



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The casual layout of a proposed Deerpath Farm house, with numerous attached outdoor living spaces, suits the informality of the subdivision’s relaxed plan.

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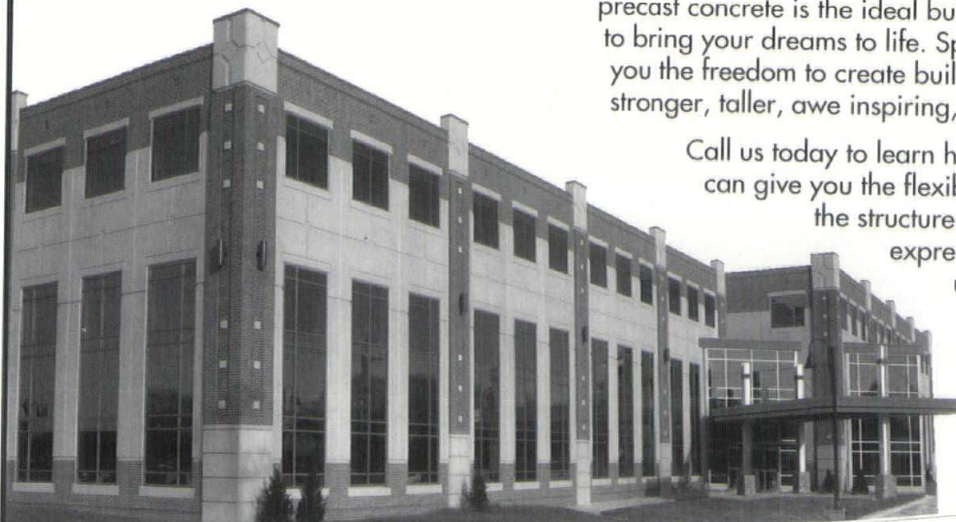
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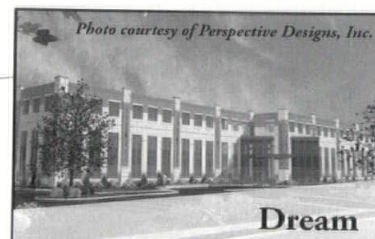
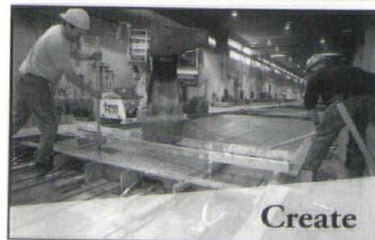


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Pay Attention

Salary study shows Chicagoans have done well in recent years, but what about the near future?

By Dennis Rodkin

The picture was sunny when AIA National's researchers finished collecting the latest round of data on salaries in the architecture industry. Over the three years since the last release of an AIA Compensation Report, in 2005, salaries had grown faster than inflation; and since 1999, salaries had risen by more than 50 percent. The years since 2005 were good, with billings up and competition for the better architects fierce.

"Oh my God, we've had salary deals that were off the charts," says Donna Gaines, principal at Chicago-based Gaines International, a leading recruiter of architects. She helped place one architect at a new post that, although it came with no ownership stake in the firm, had a total compensation package that she said would bring him at least \$330,000 a year for three years—about \$100,000 more per year than he'd been making at his old job.

But a shadow moved across the picture between the time the latest data was collected and the late-September release of the AIA Compensation Report 08 (and after Gaines's client made his lucrative deal). That shadow was a steep downward tilt in the nation's economic well-being that now has professionals in many sectors, not only architecture, worrying more about simply hanging onto a job than about whether they can count on another comfy salary increase this year.

"Things have changed," Gaines understates. The day before our interview, in mid-October when each day brought more news of the financial fallout, she saw a troubling sign in the phone call she got from a different client: "A major, major U.S. developer was

pulling the plug on the offer they were going to make to a very strategic, high-level person, not an architect but a developer. We'll hear more like that," she forecasts.

The sharp Autumn drops in AIA's national billings index—in November, the index reached its lowest point since the survey began in 1995—line up with Gaines's outlook, suggesting that the past three years' rise in architectural salaries will be followed by something less gratifying for at least the next year. (The next AIA Compensation Report is due in 2011.)

Gary Kone, the Solomon Cordwell Buenz principal who oversees recruitment and hiring, notes that newly graduated architects, in particular, will see their prospects restricted by a tight economy. In the active market of the past few years, young architects "got a lot of interviews, they really had choices, so they could be a little selective in how they negotiated," he says, but in the near future, "it's going to be much harder for them to even get interviews with offices." It's possible that 2009 graduates will relive Kone's own experience back in tight 1983, when with a newly minted master's degree, "I got one interview, one offer, so I took it."

While it's too early to say anything definitive about the

effects of the economic downturn on architectural salaries, Gaines feels confident that they're "going to come down. You're going to see compensation come down a little bit. People aren't going to demand so much [compensation] because they're going to be worried about just having a job."

Concerns about the future notwithstanding, the AIA Compensation Report 2008 has some happy news for Chicago architects. Not only do they work in one of the world's leading design cities, but according to the study, most of them are paid considerably better than their colleagues in other parts of the country. Some of that differential comes from the fact that there are numerous architecture firms in small cities where the cost of living is low, of course, but there's also a lot to be said for the competitive nature of this city: firms have to pay appropriately to get and hold the talent.

"Firms are businesses, and they have to be very mindful of how [they] compensate people, what the range is, what the market's limitations are today," Kone says, "and know that our salaries are in a fairly consistent zone."

The difference between Chicago's and the nation's salary averages is sizable at the upper end of the ladder—Chicago-area CEOs and managing principals earn 9 percent

POSITION	National	Chicago metro	Chicago only	Suburban Chicago	Chicago metro as % over national	Chicago only as % over national	Suburban Chicago as % over national	Chicago city as % over suburb
CEO	\$208,600	\$230,800	\$232,200	\$229,100	9.62%	10.16%	8.95%	1.34%
Managing principal	\$180,000	\$212,300	\$203,300	\$231,100	15.21%	11.46%	22.11%	-13.67%
Director of design	\$141,400	\$140,000	\$130,200	\$170,700	-1.00%	-8.60%	17.16%	-31.11%
Sr project manager	\$106,000	\$114,800	\$116,400	\$107,500	7.67%	8.93%	1.40%	7.65%
Project manager	\$82,100	\$82,600	\$82,800	\$82,000	0.61%	0.85%	-0.12%	0.97%
Sr project designer	\$98,700	\$114,800	\$109,600	\$90,100	14.02%	9.95%	-9.54%	17.79%
Project designer	\$74,700	\$82,500	\$85,300	na	9.45%	12.43%	na	na
Architect 3	\$95,200	\$96,100	\$100,200	\$78,300	0.94%	4.99%	-21.58%	21.86%
Unlicensed design staff 3	\$73,400	\$73,400	\$76,900	\$65,000	0.00%	4.55%	-12.92%	15.47%
Architect 2	\$74,900	\$78,400	\$80,500	\$62,500	4.46%	6.96%	-19.84%	22.36%
Unlicensed design staff 2	\$66,000	\$70,800	\$71,900	na	6.78%	8.21%	na	na
Architect 1	\$64,100	\$63,000	\$63,600	\$57,400	-1.75%	-0.79%	-11.67%	9.75%
Unlicensed design staff 1	\$54,800	\$52,000	\$51,100	\$60,300	-5.38%	-7.24%	9.12%	-18.00%
Intern 3	\$50,300	\$52,000	\$54,000	\$46,400	3.27%	6.85%	-8.41%	14.07%
Intern 2	\$45,400	\$47,500	\$48,100	\$43,200	4.42%	5.61%	-5.09%	10.19%
Intern 1	\$40,300	\$43,600	\$45,700	\$38,200	7.57%	11.82%	-5.50%	16.41%
Sr interior designer	\$85,500	\$95,800	\$98,500	na	10.75%	13.20%	na	na

Figures denote total cash compensation.

Chicago has an advantage on cost of living: In New York and San Francisco, salaries are not commensurate with living expenses and the cost of housing.

and San Francisco, Kone notes. "In those cities, salaries are not commensurate with living expenses, the cost of housing and so on," he says. Kone believes that "starting your career in Chicago is much easier within the salary ranges."

The problem comes, he says, when architects who started here get calls for jobs on the coasts: even with a higher salary, they may give up some of their standard of living. But going in the other direction can be profitable: "People who started their career on the coasts think about coming to the Midwest because it's possible to move up a little faster, afford a house."

The study also shows that architecture staffs nationwide have seen their salaries rise faster than those in other professional sectors. From the first quarter of 2002 to the first quarter of 2008, architecture salaries rose nearly 30 percent, while private sector salaries in general rose less than 19 percent, according to the report.

G

aines says that is borne out by her experience in the field: "In the last four years, when business was so good, there has been an adjustment," she says. "Before that, we were in a valley, where you got a minimal cost-of-living increase. When things got going again, the smart firms made adjustments across

the board. Not all of them did it, but the astute firms took every single person in the firm and adjusted their salaries [upward.]"

Of course, architecture is both a business and an art—and for many people who work in the field, if the art side is satisfied, the business side will go along. "It's all about the projects," Gaines says. "People do architecture because they love the projects." Frequently, she says, she calls an architect to gauge

to 15 percent more in total compensation than their peer group nationwide. It's not as large a gap, and in some places, no gap at all, at lower levels—the least-experienced licensed architects make slightly less than the national average in Chicago, and in the suburbs, a lot less than the national average.

Salary is not the only factor in the financial equation: there's also cost of living. And that's where Chicago gains a lot of ground on other pre-eminent American design cities, such as New York

his or her interest in a lucrative, high-profile position but the person says "Donna, I'm not paid well enough but I'm working on a very exciting project, and I want to stay here to see it through. Can you call me back in two or three years?"

It's not, surely, that they don't hope to be paid better, but that much of their payoff doesn't come in the form of a check.

A salary scale is meaningless at some firms. At Murphy Jahn, for example, says executive vice president Sam Scaccia, FAIA, "we highly individualize" compensation, going on such ineffables as unrealized talent. As a result, he says, "we have some very young people here who are earning very good salaries, and let's put it this way: it's not because of their years of experience."

Scaccia continues, "we never approach compensation as, 'somebody's got five years of experience and a job title, so they get paid this much.' You can't equate the idea of what an architect does to basic industry standards like a factory worker—and that's not with any disparagement to factory workers. But you can't say an architect needs to make so many widgets or keep putting the same piece into the mold to make the same thing. That's not what architecture is about."

Starter salaries, Scaccia says, are "easier to deal with because that's market-driven. Everybody has a baseline for pay." But as early as their third or fourth years on the job, he says, "people start to really distinguish themselves. Some are on a track where they get a nominal increase and some will get exceptional salaries."

How do they distinguish themselves? "What are your talents, and are you pursuing them further and longer," Scaccia says. "It's not the guy who says, 'OK, I'm done. What do you want me to do next?' It's the one who says, 'I want to see if I can take this another step, I want to push this design a little further.'"

That, says Gaines, is the type of architect who will always find the best pay—by going for the best payoff. "People in our industry don't really have to behave well to be paid well," she says. "If they have to, the firms will say, 'You don't have any interpersonal skills, but you can draw a beautiful building. So we'll stick you in a room and you can just slide the drawings out under the door.'" And the paycheck will pass it going in the other direction. CA

ABOUT CHICAGO ARCHITECT'S SALARY CHART

All the data on this chart comes from the AIA Compensation Report 2008's East North Central regional summary.

While the Compensation Report broke compensation down to base salary and additional pay for overtime, bonuses and other add-ons, for this chart on p.43, *Chicago Architect* combined those two figures to create one compensation total for each of 17 job types.

The national report, which was based on extensive surveying, has information on 40 positions, including human resources generalist, landscape architect and graphic designer. We narrowed it down because of space limitations.

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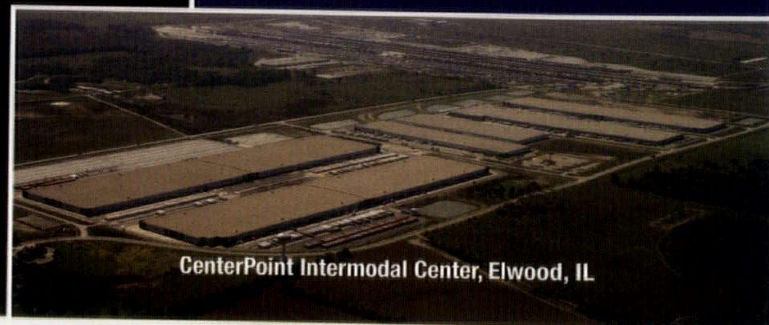
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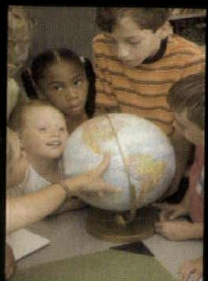
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|BetterTogether|

We learned how to assemble—and take apart—a successful joint venture

By Percy E. Roberts III, AIA, and Chris Liakakos, AIA

Architects are no strangers to joint ventures; they often choose to team with other firms to create a comprehensive package of experience tailored to a client's specific needs. But for the two of us (VOA Associates and OWP/P) a recent joint venture was a bit different because it was our client (in this case, Northwestern Memorial Hospitals) that suggested that we, who are usually competitors, team up to provide NMH with what they saw as the best talent for the new Prentice Women's Hospital.

As we reflect on our experience, we realize the lessons it taught us can benefit our peers.

IT STARTED WITH A PHONE CALL AND CAME TOGETHER OVER FISH

At the outset, each of us got approximately the same call. The client recognized that each of us had a long and productive relationship with the hospitals. They knew how we performed, and that we were key individuals in our firms with whom they thought they could partner. They also believed that if we could work together, they would get the best in both medical planning and architectural design.

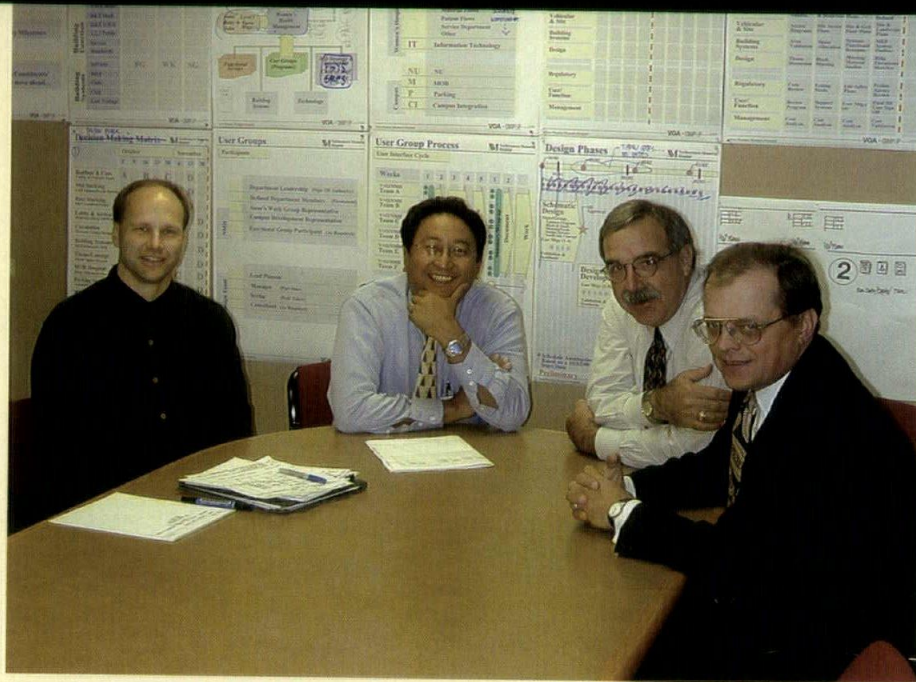
When we met for lunch at Nick's Fishmarket, we had known each other but had not worked together. In the course of lunch, we discovered what we believed the client had seen in each of us: mutual respect, trust and a service-oriented approach that led us to put the client's needs ahead of any individual needs or goals. We've since realized that this kind of personality fit is key to the success of any joint venture. We were able to hash out the details of how we would team within the span of that first lunch.

Three key agreements set the foundation for the joint venture called the VOA/OWPP Design Collaborative:

- 1) We agreed to a 50/50 split of labor and revenue and agreed to work out the details as they arose.
- 2) Teambuilding was solely an issue of competency, not of affiliation to one firm or the other.
- 3) The JV would be structured to allow the team a singular focus on the task at hand.

PUTTING OUR ACT TOGETHER

Deciding to collaborate is nice, but success comes down to whether you can walk the talk. Setting up the business apparatus to support a joint



From left, Percy Roberts, VOA, Mike Yoshimura, OWP/P, Chris Liakakos, OWP/P and Tom Fromm, formerly of VOA.

venture (including accounting, technology, staff, database, chain of command and location) turns out to be the easy part. Even with a commitment to collaboration, shared vision, mission and direction, and a strong work plan, there is always pressure on the team to get out of sync. But there is no progress made in trying to out-compete each other.

We had to become a team, stay a team, and demonstrate to all of our team members and collaborating partners that we were a united front in service to this client. To mitigate internal challenges, we focused on managing expectations at our respective firms and co-locating on-site to create a truly client-focused team.

Each of us was the individual the client selected from his respective firm to lead the Prentice Women's Hospital project, and each holds a senior leadership position within his firm. Before we could make ourselves available to the project, we negotiated with our firms to respect our occasionally exclusive commitment of resources to the Prentice project and worked out protocols that would allow our internal firm responsibilities to be taken care of in our absence. We knew that it would not only be us, but also our internal colleagues, who would have to go the extra mile to ensure this project was a success.

Better Together

continued from page 47

We then left our workspaces in our own offices and, with our Prentice project team, co-located at a site on the NMH campus for the duration of the project.

We sat across from each other at a partners' table. We dialogued easily and overheard each other constantly. Our team sat with us in workstations in the same room. While this was the ideal location to support our focus on the task at hand, it also required that we give our current colleagues/former competitors the consideration we give a client when it comes to respecting each other's confidences and clearing logjams through discussion.

We were lucky in this instance that the project on which we were collaborating was in the same city as our firms' offices, and we recognize that it would be costlier and more complicated to co-locate farther from home. However, we've come to the conclusion that allowing team members to sit with each other and away from their home offices goes a long way toward supporting effective collaboration.

MORE LESSONS LEARNED

Focused, collaborative project teams have a flexibility that may not exist in large firms. JV projects can, for example, be great incubators for new technologies. We were able to test-drive first generation Building Information Modeling software and have taken our experience back to our respective firms. It was like having the best of both worlds, the agility of a small firm and the resources of a large one.

Every team that comes together to support a particular project must be disbanded when the project is done. Inside an individual firm, teams that come together successfully can stay together to work on the next project. Not so with the joint venture project team.

For many reasons we were lucky in bringing this team together. We were two partners with a good personality fit. Our individual firms supported our commitment to the project, and thereby to each other. Our team held firm to the idea of putting egos and affiliations behind in service to the client.

Because this particular joint venture was so successful, dismantling it felt like shuttering a successful, profitable office. Thus, the final lesson learned was: the better things come together, the harder it is to take them apart. CA

Percy Roberts III is president of VOA Associates. Chris Liakakos is a principal at OWP/P.



Prentice Women's Hospital

Photo by Craig Dugan, Hedrich Blessing



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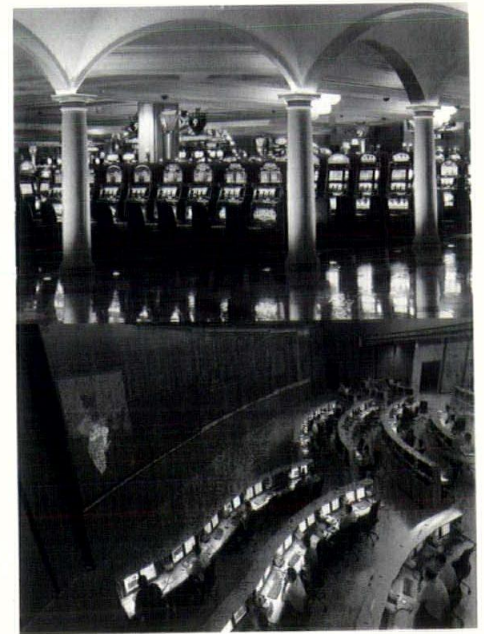
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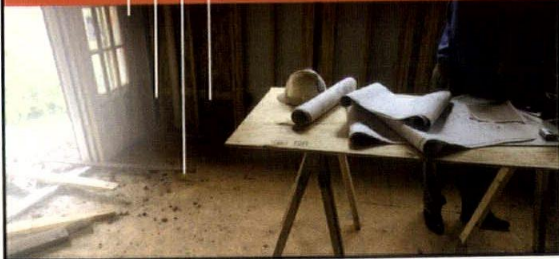
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|BlownAway|

A skeptical look at urban wind turbines

By Nathan Kipnis, AIA

On the cover of its September/October 2008 issue, *Chicago Architect* featured wind turbines atop a Bucktown home designed by Wilkinson Blender Architecture. They're two 1000 watt Aeroturbines developed by Aerotecture of Chicago; others in the same line have been used by Helmut Jahn on the roof of the SRO he designed on Clybourn Avenue. In fact, a couple of years ago, I did a design submittal for the Ford Calumet Ecology Center competition, and I put these same turbines in it.

I love the way these turbines look. The Aeroturbine is a beautiful form.

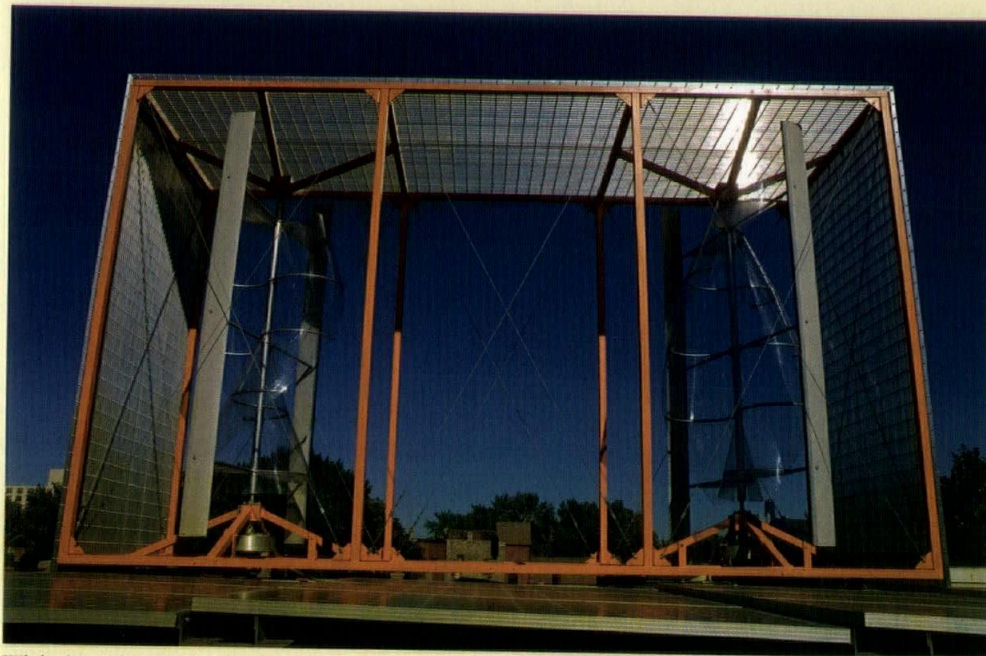
But that doesn't mean that these turbines are always the right answer. The performance data at aerotecture.com states that the 510V model Aeroturbine produces one kilowatt in 32 mph wind. The average wind speed in the Chicago area is about 10 mph. Factor in the turbulence from trees, adjacent buildings, etc., and it is probably closer to 8 mph. At 8 mph, the performance data chart for these turbines shows that one unit generates 15 watts of power—which is what you need for a single compact fluorescent bulb.

I'm not aware of any of these turbines being purchased in Chicago at market rates; they've been underwritten by grants and other incentives from the city and other agencies. But if you were to buy this unit at market value, you'd pay \$21,000. That's \$21,000 to generate enough power for one light bulb.

The manufacturer says that its turbines even generate power in storms, and that's good because most turbines are not able to do that, but storms are rare. It's what they do during the course of a year that needs to be looked at; that's the ultimate data that should be used.

I don't see who can afford to put these turbines up at market rates—and that's what concerns me. I'm afraid there could be a lot of angry clients down the line who realize the turbines aren't meeting their expectations of cheap, renewable energy, and it could potentially turn them off to these green technologies.

And then you run the risk of these things becoming the target for someone who doesn't want sustainable design to succeed, or the public that doesn't understand why it didn't do what



While this turbine's form delights the article's author, he has reservations about its efficiency.

they expected it to do. They'll point at it as a story of how green technology doesn't work. Certain talk radio announcers could eat this thing up: "Look at that. It's a \$20,000 piece of equipment and you run one lightbulb with it. Ha!"

You don't want bad stories like that, you want green success stories that are easy to understand. There are a lot of green things that are very easy to justify on a cost basis. Insulation is a big one in the cold climate we have here. It's not as much fun to put in really good, really tight insulation, but that's sometimes the best answer on a residential project. It's just not as architectonic to pile on insulation as it is to put up these great-looking devices.

I don't blame the architects at all for what they were trying to do. They went for LEED Platinum, which means pulling out all the stops. This is more a possible symptom of what achieving high levels of LEED does to our projects than it is a criticism of the architects.

As architects, we want something that has form, and these wind turbines are such a cool form: you see the spiral spinning inside this outer cage, and it says that it's doing something, it's making power. But even that form is working against it; the outer cage causes drag, which seems to be one of the reasons these units don't generate more power than they do.

They look so good. I'd like to see groups of wind turbines on the corners of a high-rise, signaling to people that this is a green building that gets some of its power from wind. That's the message that wind turbines mounted on top of a house can convey: we use wind power to provide for some of our needs. It's a nice thing to tell people who can't see that you're also using solar photovoltaics up on the roof, and that you have a lot of insulation inside the walls. Some people want to see that a building is green—and some people want their building to be seen being green. Whoever gets to put them up first gets to point the way; they get to say, this is what we should all be doing now. And they're right. We should all be considering how to generate our own power. It's a very American idea, generating the power that you need.

But in an urban context, we might find out that it's better to be working at the community level. For wind power, you might want your town putting up turbines in groups in an open area or out in Lake Michigan.

Recently, I did a project for a client who wanted everything—solar photovoltaics, geothermal and this and that and the other. I probably did one too many things for

him. It's an easy trap to fall into. You would think it's additive, that you just keep getting better energy performance as you add on these things and how can you go wrong. But there's a diminishing return. Some of the technologies don't improve much on what the better ones are doing.

We're in an environment now where capital has gotten very tight, so you have to do the smartest things you can do. Sometimes not adding more equipment is the smarter move.

In my opinion, this round of wind turbines should be seen as version 1.0. It's like the iPod; it will evolve and there will be newer, better models and models that are completely different. But the people who got it first were cool because they bought it first.

These turbines are the same way. I think they're very cool to look at, and a very good idea. But I want them to work better, to provide more power at the price they cost. This technology should be able to move forward in revolutionary ways, not just evolutionary ways. **CA**

Nathan Kipnis is the principal of Nathan Kipnis Architects, Inc. in Evanston and is a co-chair of the Renewable Energy component for the city of Evanston's Climate Action Plan.

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(article on p. 30)



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Karl Schneider
Mike Schwerzler
Scott Studabaker, AIA,
associate
Man Tam

REAL SIMPLE

(article on p. 36)



Glade House

Structure: wood frame, 2x6 exterior walls, 2x4 interior walls, prefab gable roof trusses, open web floor and flat roof trusses, steel columns and beams where needed
Exterior finishes: eastern white cedar shingles, western red cedar board siding, Cabot weathering gray stain
Pitched roofing: Z-T Alloy by Revere
Flat roofing: single membrane
Interior finishes: 1x6 T&G clear western red cedar ceilings, 5/8-inch drywall walls and ceilings, Benjamin Moore paint, white oak strip flooring, slate flooring, American Olean cerami shower/tub surrounds, maple cabinets, clear douglas fir trim
Exterior decking: 1x6 clear cedar
HVAC: hydronic in-floor heat, forced air and sheet metal air conditioning
Exterior operable windows and doors: Quantum, oiled teak
Exterior fixed glazing: custom, carpenter-built
Interior doors: flush solid core birch
Appliances: mostly GE
Kitchen sink: Elkay
Bathroom fixtures: Kohler and American Standard
Faucets: Kroin
Hardware: Schlage
Living room and master bedroom pendant lights: Artimedie
Kitchen pendant lights: Poulsen
Recessed lights: Juno
Dining room and bathroom sconces: Hemera Cassis
Interior and exterior railings: custom fabricated steel and cable

Coming in the March | April issue of

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BUILDING TECHNOLOGY

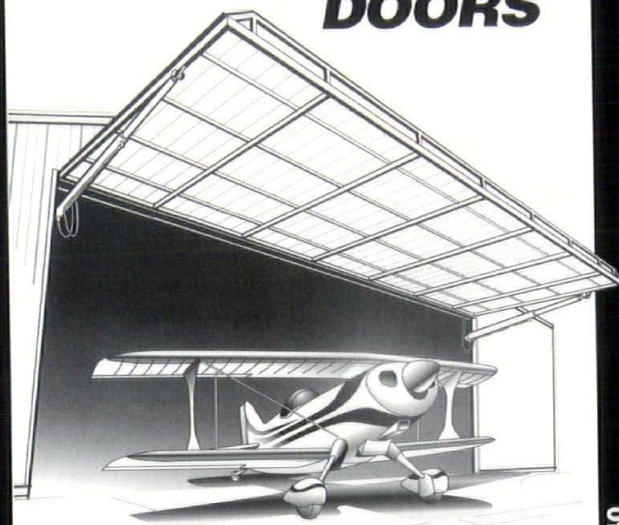
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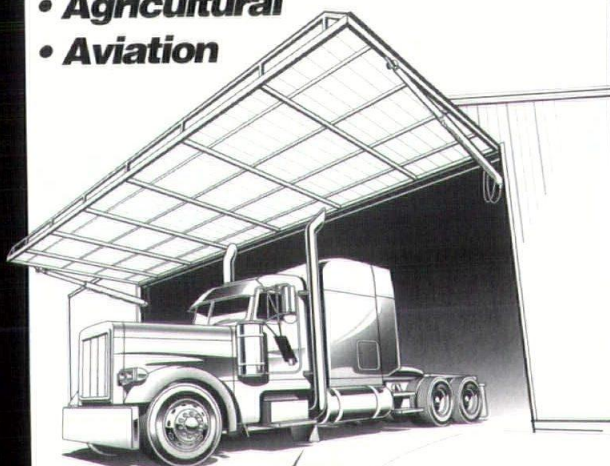
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