

# CHICAGO ARCHITECT

## *2021 Small Project Awards*



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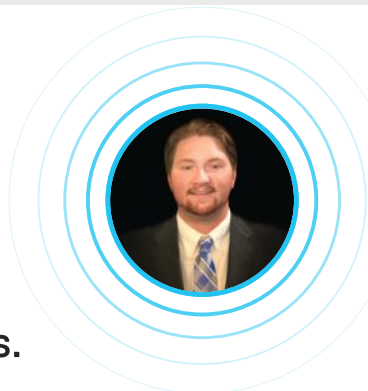
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# CHICAGO ARCHITECT

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# Our Commitment to Change



Summer in Chicago typically marks a turning point for many of us in regard to our mental health and well-being. We're re-energized, relishing the additional hours of daylight and soaking in the cultural offerings of our great city. As we emerge from a global pandemic, let's cherish the lessons learned from a year at home. Embrace the slower pace of our daily schedules. Greet your colleagues and truly ask how they are doing versus jumping into the agenda (corny Zoom jokes are still in style)! This will help build trust and transparency across all levels. Be focused and present in meetings; intentional connections are needed and will allow our practices and communities to recover and thrive.

At the beginning of the year, I shared three goals to help frame our initiatives:

**PARTNERSHIPS** — Strengthen and leverage resources with allied organizations to share knowledge and inspire.

**PEOPLE** — Continue to foster a healthy connection between members and AIA Chicago, by sharing stories and encouraging engagement. Provide support where needed to help individuals and firms prosper in 2021.

**PROMOTE HOPE** — Through the lens of climate change and social justice, doubling down to cultivate equitable communities.

2021 has been moving fast. Here is a snapshot of our members' activity:

**PARTNERSHIPS** — 2021 marks the 11th Small Project Awards, celebrating Chicago's small firms and the big impact they have on our city. This year, we're thrilled to recognize four projects that demonstrate strong concepts, resourcefulness and ingenuity. The Small Project Awards wouldn't be possible without the leadership of our Small Practitioners Group and Custom Residential

Architects Network, and we are so grateful to them for their ongoing work in this awards program.

**PEOPLE** — We also recognize two forthcoming books written by AIA Chicago members: a new book by Peter Exley, FAIA, and Sharon Exley of Architecture is Fun; and another by Stuart Cohen, FAIA. Architecture is Fun's monograph will remind us that, especially after this past difficult year, play remains integral to our health and happiness. In Cohen's book, *Frank Lloyd Wright and the Architects of Steinway Hall*, we are again reminded of the importance of community: Cohen helps us understand the importance of exchanging ideas with our peers during the design process.

**PEOPLE** — Finally, we also learn about another smaller-scale project — on wheels — by CannonDesign. Their new Mobile Museum of Tolerance is a bus that has been retrofitted into a mobile museum, educating visitors on the history and lasting influence of tolerance and inclusion.

In closing, I want to reflect on our organizations' commitment to change, particularly as it relates to racial injustice and social equity. Within our profession and many of our own office walls, there have been courageous conversations occurring: People getting comfortable with being uncomfortable; colleagues sharing personal stories; shattering stereotypes and inspiring multiple generations across our city.

"Treating different things the same can generate as much inequality as treating the same things differently." — Kimberle Crenshaw

Jessica Figenholtz, AIA



*Chicago Architect*, the primary outreach tool of AIA Chicago, is published four times a year as an authoritative resource for architects, the larger design community and the public about architecture and related issues of interest to Chicago architects. The magazine communicates industry trends, the value of high-quality design and the role of AIA Chicago and its members in the world of architecture.

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-Andreas Lange, AIA, senior associate, Perfido Weiskopf Wagstaff + Goettel

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**Ardmore House**  
Credit: James Florio



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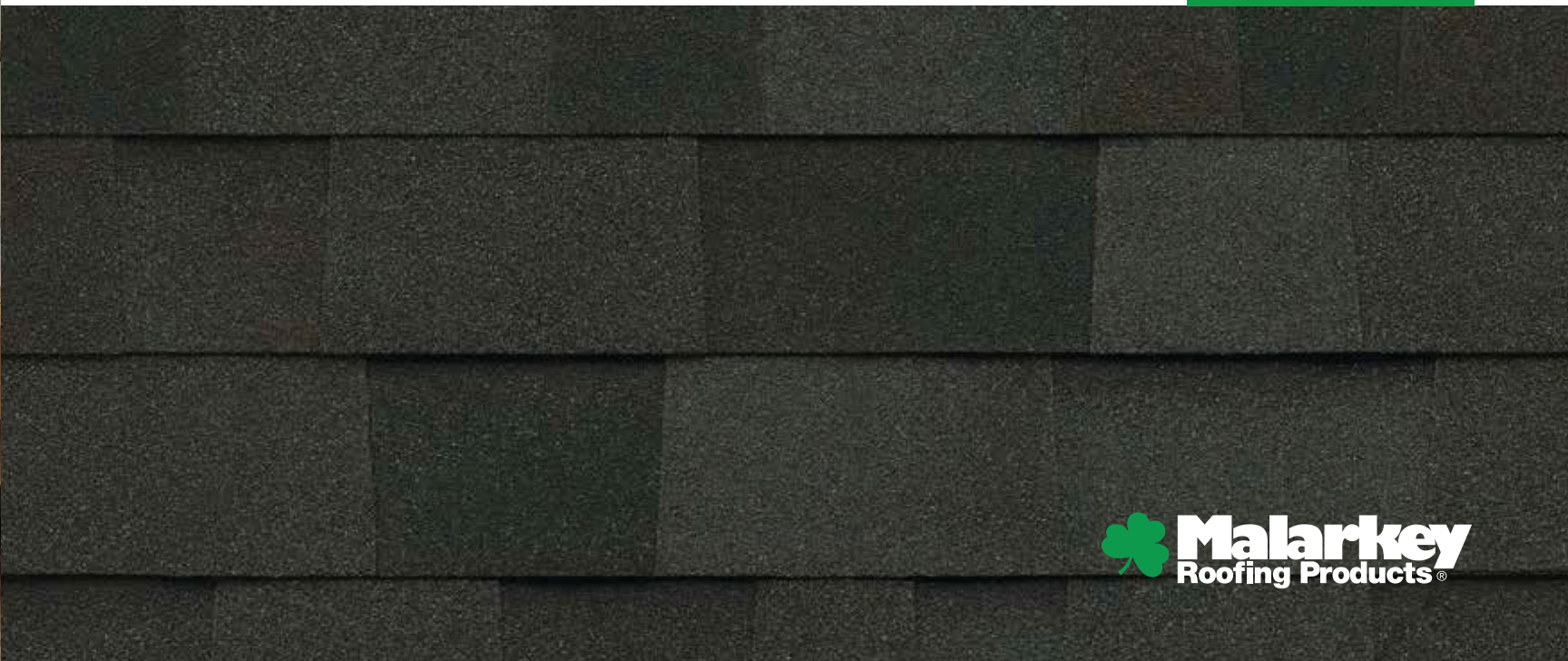
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# The Mobile Museum of Tolerance: Not Your Average School Bus

BY TAYLOR MOORE

Hate crimes are on the rise, resulting in attacks on marginalized people across the country. This museum on wheels is trying to help stop that trend — through education.

The Mobile Museum of Tolerance is the first of its kind in the United States, intended to empower young people to speak up against racism,

antisemitism, sexism and other forms of discrimination. The idea originated from the Simon Wiesenthal Center, a Jewish human rights organization. In

2014, it launched a “Tour for Humanity” bus that traveled to schools across Canada, delivering calls to action against hatred. The buses are a supplement to its Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles: “If you can’t go to the museum, the museum comes to you,” says Mehrdad Yazdani.

Yazdani is the design principal for Yazdani Studio of CannonDesign, an international architecture firm. Yazdani has worked with the Wiesenthal Center for more than 23 years, designing the organization’s headquarters, exhibitions at the LA museum, and the 65,000-square-foot interiors of the planned museum in Jerusalem.

But this isn’t your average school bus. Emblazoned on the bus façade are supergraphics of human rights activists. These splashy portraits (which include Rosa Parks, Cesar Chavez, Simon Wiesenthal, Harriet Tubman, Mahatma Gandhi, Malala Yousafzai and Anne Frank) are meant to inspire students and neighboring motorists alike. “As it moves through the streets, it becomes a messaging board unto itself,” Yazdani says.

Retrofitting a bus was a challenge. “As architects we’re used to designing spaces that don’t move,” Yazdani quips. In this case, the vehicle was stripped of its interiors and reconstructed as a hybrid between a bus and an RV. When

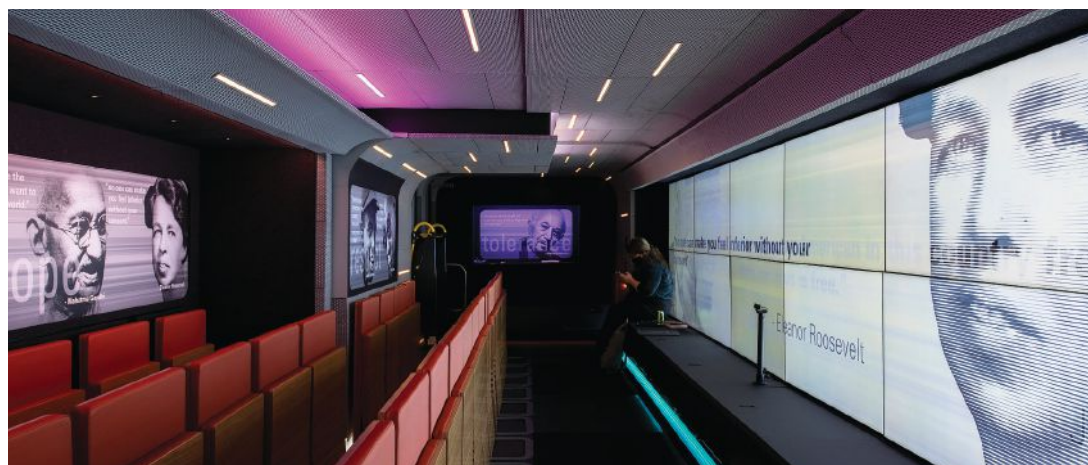
parked, elements of the bus fold out to offer more room inside.

Once you board, you’ll notice the interior is more like a movie theater than a static exhibit, featuring mood lighting, 35 built-in seats, foldable tables and a widescreen display that plays short films about the Holocaust,

the 1960s civil rights movement and other pivotal moments in human history. Yazdani also incorporated social elements to emulate the interactivity of the LA museum, which often invites Holocaust survivors to speak. For example, two of the three rows of seats can be flipped to

transform the space into a forum where students can debate ideas face-to-face.

The Mobile Museum of Tolerance has had stints in Chicago and Springfield, and will make its way around schools and community centers in Illinois based on reservations. CA



The Wiesenthal Center designed the bus's interior content.



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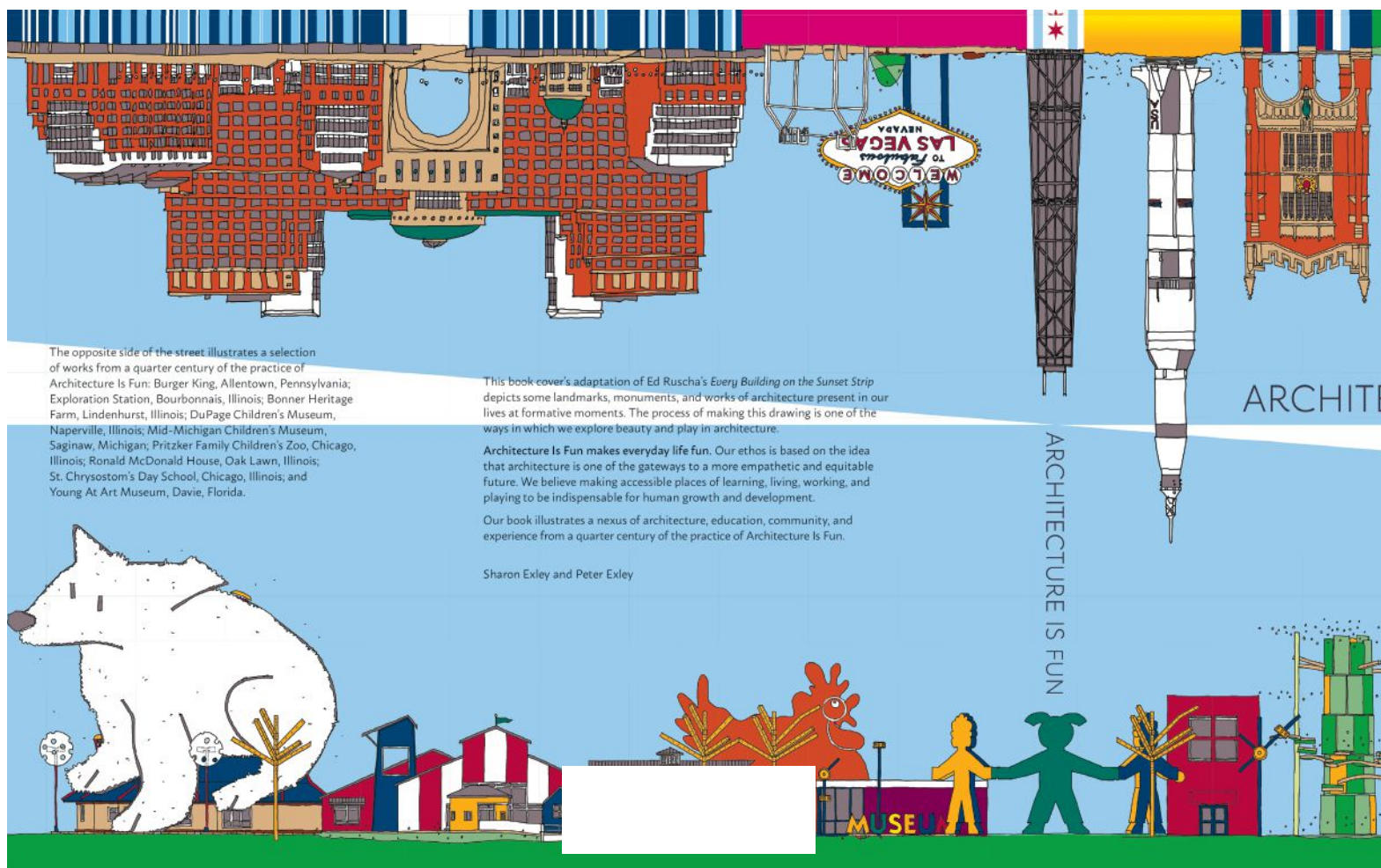
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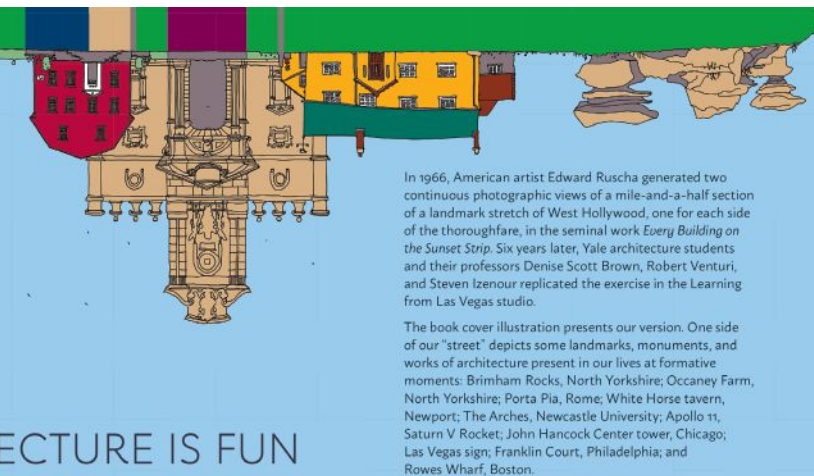
## Architecture Is Fun

**T**hroughout the COVID-19 pandemic — particularly early on, when cities began to close their public amenities, and stay-at-home orders were issued — one of the main spaces of uncertainty and anxiety has been playspaces. Playgrounds were especially difficult: Between unknown surface transmission and crowds, play felt dangerous.

With schools closed indefinitely, parents were tasked with inventing play in their own homes and many students were physically isolated from their friends. 2020 was, to say the least, not the year for play.

It's fitting then that Architecture Is Fun — led by Peter Exley, FAIA, and Sharon Exley — will release their new self-titled book *Architecture Is Fun* (Images Publishing) this summer, when people of all ages are revisiting play after one year apart from it.

The gap year from play had deep and resounding effects on everyone, said Sharon, who also believes this is a critical moment to revisit joy in the way we interact with the built environment. "Right now, the coronavirus pandemic is a collective trauma that we've all been going through. It has caused social and community disruptions that could have a lasting negative impact on the well-being of children and adults. We find ourselves mourning the loss of some institutions, community and



In 1966, American artist Edward Ruscha generated two continuous photographic views of a mile-and-a-half section of a landmark stretch of West Hollywood, one for each side of the thoroughfare, in the seminal work *Every Building on the Sunset Strip*. Six years later, Yale architecture students and their professors Denise Scott Brown, Robert Venturi, and Steven Izenour replicated the exercise in the Learning from Las Vegas studio.

The book cover illustration presents our version. One side of our "street" depicts some landmarks, monuments, and works of architecture present in our lives at formative moments: Brimham Rocks, North Yorkshire; Occaney Farm, North Yorkshire; Porta Pia, Rome; White Horse tavern, Newport; The Arches, Newcastle University; Apollo 11, Saturn V Rocket; John Hancock Center tower, Chicago; Las Vegas sign; Franklin Court, Philadelphia; and Rowes Wharf, Boston.

ECTURE IS FUN

Sharon Exley and Peter Exley

(continues on back flap)



Cover illustration © Peter Exley

IMAGES COURTESY OF ARCHITECTURE IS FUN

**“Play is what helps us process what we’ve been through. And I think play helps us make sense of the scary times we’ve been in.”**

**Sharon Exley**

might, but also to reflect on their work’s meaning and impact.

A follow-up to their first monograph, *Design for Kids* (Images Publishing, 2007), this new book retains the size and scope of an updated monograph but with significant changes that reflect the firm’s evolution as thought leaders and as professionals. “Our first book, which we wrote in 2006, was an opportunity to document everything we had done,” said Peter. “And this is a more selective and more mature reflection on what we think is the work that defines Architecture Is Fun. So I think our work has evolved into a little canon of empathetic work that is making a difference.”

That process is one of storytelling — collecting, documenting and representing the stories behind client needs, processes and out-

comes — and combining them with illustration and photography.

“The first book was about responding to a true trivialized topic like play and fun as a project type. I think this book is not that at all. It’s about what the community needed or the project required in terms of how we told the story through the architecture and responded to the needs of that particular community, your group,” said Sharon.

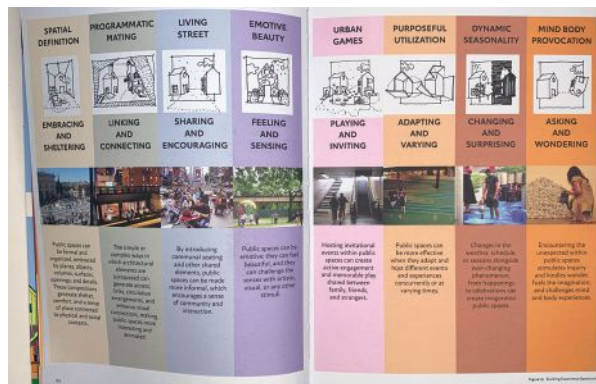
What Peter calls “a timeline of stories” holds the possibility to become a toolbox to revisit play and playfulness through architecture. As a book, *Architecture Is Fun* can become a reference point for future design work to integrate much-needed play in structures to come; but as a message, it is one we are all ready to hear. **CA**

neighborhood-based institutions, some of our own clients who couldn’t financially survive the span of the pandemic. And this is really sad, because we need play in our lives more than ever, right now.”

Throughout the years we’ve heard researchers expounding on the importance of recess at school, noting that “play deprivation” can lead to all types of physical and psychological challenges with long-term consequences, including depression, anxiety, stress and obesity. In life during and

immediately after the COVID-19 pandemic, Sharon believes that we are seeing play deprivation “at scales we’ve never seen before.”

“We need to push communities, schools, workplaces, to value play, now more than ever,” said Sharon. “Play is what helps us process what we’ve been through. And I think play helps us make sense of the scary times we’ve been in.” This new book promises to not only document Architecture Is Fun’s work designing for play and learning as a monograph



# Frank Lloyd Wright and the Architects of Steinway Hall

New Book by Stuart Cohen Focuses on Collaboration

**A**rchitect Stuart Cohen, FAIA, started his career as a self-described “amateur historian” in 1976, around the time he was asked to write the catalog essay for an upcoming Stanley Tigerman exhibition, “Chicago Architects.” “That was the beginning of my looking closely at Chicago architecture in almost a contrarian way,” Cohen said.

“Everyone thought it was well-established by previous authors who wrote about Chicago’s architectural history in the first half of the 20th century. I said, wait! There are oversimplifications — those writings don’t reflect the architectural culture at that time, the breadth of buildings done and ideas being investigated.” He subsequently focused his essay on those missing pieces, sorting through every issue of now-defunct *Inland Architect*,

studying not just the buildings and drawings from each issue but also assembling a sense of the community culture of professionals working in architecture.

Now, almost 45 years later, Cohen has returned to that particular research on Chicago’s legacy architecture communities, focusing on one specific circle of studio mates. *Frank L. Wright and the Architects of Steinway Hall: A Study of Collaboration* (ORO Editions, 2021) provides a

history of Frank Lloyd Wright, Robert Spencer, Dwight Perkins and Myron Hunt — all young architects who shared a studio space in Steinway Hall in 1897.

The impetus for wanting to write a book about collaboration, said Cohen, came to him after reading *Collaborative Circles: Friendship Dynamics and Creative Work*, a book by sociologist and professor at SUNY Buffalo Michael Farrell. “The book is about creative groups of people who change their field of practice, like the Impressionists. They were in a sense young folks who set out to change painting in Paris at that time,” explained Cohen.

“Michael Farrell offers this definition: They’re a group — generally four, five, six people — who are all of the same age, starting out in their profession or practice, who are dissatisfied with what’s happening in

their discipline, want to see it change but are unaware of how to change it. They collaborate on the commons of their project,” he continued.

Cohen’s aha moment brought him back to 1976, researching Chicago’s architectural culture and discovering the unique studio environment that housed Wright, Spencer, Perkins and Hunt. He set to work trying to find documentation of this circle of practitioners. How, if at all, did they influence each other?

“Other than a page or two in Wright’s biography and his testament, a couple of paragraphs in Marion Mahoney’s *Magic in America* and a short article H. Allen Brooks wrote, there was nothing, absolutely nothing,” said Cohen. “I was in touch with the Avery Library, and they have all of Wright’s correspondence. There’s nothing

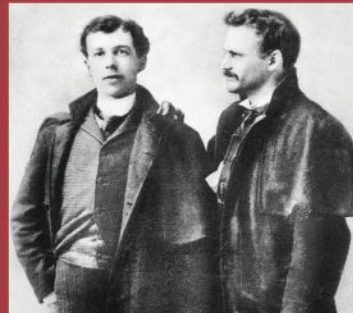
**“The whole idea of the individual genius working alone is a romantic idea that art historians seem to still cling to, as opposed to the idea that we are all what we eat.”**

**Stuart Cohen, FAIA**

IMAGES COURTESY OF STUART COHEN, FAIA

In 1897 Frank Lloyd Wright, Robert Spencer, Dwight Perkins, and Myron Hunt—all young architects just starting out in practice—shared office space in Chicago. This book is both a history of that brief period and an attempt to assess the extent to which they collaborated on their architectural designs and on the creation of architectural theory that would impact a half century of architectural design. This study engages in a side-by-side comparison of projects they each designed while working in the loft of Chicago's Steinway Hall. Overlapping ideas, design similarities, and an analysis of their subsequent work all suggest that these colleagues formed a creative “collaborative circle” of friends, who jointly developed the ideas underlying their work. This is a book about artistic collaboration at a time when discussions of art and architectural history are still largely dominated by the cult of the individual genius.

FRANK L. WRIGHT  
AND THE ARCHITECTS OF STEINWAY HALL



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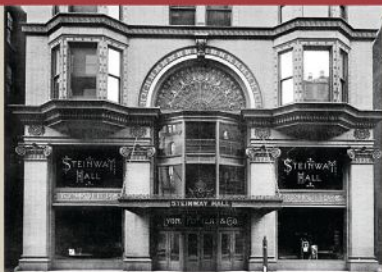


Stuart Cohen is an author, educator, and practicing architect. His contributions to architectural history, theory, and education have been recognized by the Society of Architectural Historians' 2019 Award for Excellence in Design, Academics and Scholarship and by the Institute for Classical Architecture and Art's 2018 Arthur Ross Award. He is a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and professor of Architecture Emeritus at the University of Illinois Chicago.

A STUDY IN COLLABORATION

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addressed to people he shared that space with. It has never been looked at.” The lack of written documentation allowed him to, instead, turn to the drawings made by each architect during that particular period — a type of documentation that Cohen, as an architect, was very familiar with.

“When you start looking at the work, there are some remarkable similarities,” said Cohen. “The only thing you can conclude is that these things were ideas created collaboratively through discussion and work and more discussion. The evidence is from what they said from their time there, but

looking at projects side by side. That makes for a really compelling argument.” The resulting book promises to be a fascinating study in collaboration, but also helps to shed the notion of the *lone genius*. “The whole idea of the individual genius working alone is a romantic idea that art historians seem

to still cling to,” Cohen said, “as opposed to the idea that we are all what we eat.” <sup>CA</sup>

Frank L. Wright and the Architects of Steinway Hall: A Study of Collaboration is available for preorder on Amazon and will be available for purchase through Oro Editions ([www.oroeditions.com](http://www.oroeditions.com)) in June 2021.



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The 110-story Willis Tower has marked a major milestone in its transformation with the completion of a new Skydeck experience designed by **SOM, Thinc Design, and Chicago ScenicStudios**. The renovation is the latest in SOM's 50-year stewardship of Willis Tower, which includes the design of the tower itself, and the 2009 addition of the Ledge at the Skydeck, a series of glass-enclosed balconies that offer visitors the opportunity to experience the city from 103 stories above ground.



Evanston, Illinois-based **Morgante Wilson Architects, Ltd.** has promoted **Alicia Chlebek Blakely** from project manager to associate of architecture.



**FitzGerald** announced that **Kathy Graham** has been made an equity partner of FitzGerald. She joined the firm in 2006 as manager of administration, rose to director of finance and administration, and was named chief operating officer in 2019.

The 133,000-square-foot Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts, designed by **Studio Gang** architects and landscape architect **SCAPE**, announced completion of the innovative roof. The roof is a flowing, folded plate concrete structure, spanning the length of the building and connecting new construction and renovated spaces. The museum has announced that it will celebrate the public opening in May 2022.



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**John Ronan Architects** was the design architect and architect of record for the Chicago Park District headquarters. The 78,000-square-foot building, park and fieldhouse is in the Brighton Park Neighborhood of Chicago. Two stories and circular in plan, the building delineates the fieldhouse from the headquarters through the extension of the park pathway through the building. **Site Design Group** is the landscape architect on the project.



**Canopy** has promoted **Nora Catlin** to director of operations and marketing; **Armando Tobias, AIA**, and **Vanessa Wiltshire, LEED GA**, to associate principal; **Philip Schmidt, RA, CPHC, LEED AP**, to senior associate; **Andreea Micu, CDT**, to project architect; and **Catherine Varnas, LEED GA**, to senior project architect.



**DII Architecture** was the architect and builder for a small 1940 home needing a second floor master suite addition, office and green roof deck. The minimalist, sleek addition allows the home's original architectural vernacular to remain intact

PEOPLE + PROJECTS

**John Ronan Architects** was the design architect and architect of record for the Northside Cultural District in Chicago. The project consists of a 31,000-square-foot new construction cultural center housing the Ed Paschke Art Center, a museum and education center celebrating the work of the renowned Chicago Artist, The Chicago Art Center, a temporary art exhibition gallery and the National Veterans Art Museum.



Construction has finished on the Simulated Scenario Village at Cuyahoga Community College's Western Campus (Parma, Ohio). The 40,900-square-foot village, designed by **Legat Architects** and **DS Architecture**, offers lifelike first responder training.



The shareholders that make up 40 percent of **Legat Architects'** employees have elected three new members to the firm's board of directors: **Michael Lundeen, AIA, LEED AP** (Chicago studio), **Jeff Sandberg, AIA, LEED AP** (Quad Cities studio), and **Rob Wroble, AIA, LEED AP** (Oak Brook studio).

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# SKYWATER

A young woman pauses while hiking across land traversed long ago by her Paiute ancestors in an area north of what is now called Gerlach, Nevada.

Though surrounded by acres of wetlands and dozens of natural spring-water pools, she is thirsty. As she scans the landscape of subtle browns and tans, she catches a ray of starlight reflected off of a tall, bronze, leaflike object in the distance.

"Pangadu, Paa'a" (SkyWater), she whispers to herself as she smiles and heads in that direction.

- Water vapor is present in harvestable quantities even at low relative humidity.
- SkyWater uses solar power to convert water vapor to potable water.
- Up to 9.5 Liters of water per unit is produced per day.

**P.K. VanderBeke, AIA, Migel Santos, Alexandra Flora-Ferreira and Lorenz Mager** were shortlisted in the Land Art Generator Initiative Fly Ranch 2020. The competition invited designs in power, water, shelter, food and regeneration.



**KOO Architecture** has completed Sable at Navy Pier, a part of Chicago's Navy Pier with its design of Sable at Navy Pier, a part of the Curio Collection by Hilton Hotels, that opened in March 2021.

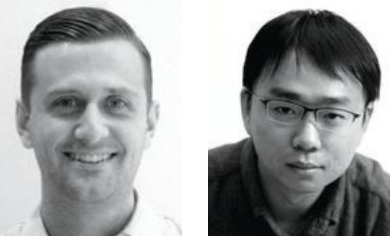


**SmithGroup** completed the Cudahy Science Hall renovation on Loyola University's Lakeshore campus. The renovation is a state-of-the-art physics learning environment that improves classroom organization and layout options for physics-based labs and classroom spaces.



**Arris Finkbeiner, AIA, NCARB, NCIDQ, LEED AP BD+C** has joined **Legat Architects'** Oak Brook, Illinois studio as project architect.

PEOPLE + PROJECTS



**Goettsch Partners** promoted **Nathaniel Hollister, AIA**; **Alex Kang, LEED AP**; and **Afaq Syed, AIA, CDT, LEED AP**, to senior associate; and **John Campbell**; **Katie Maciejko, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, WELL AP**; **Kirk Tracy**; and **Haiping Yu** to associate.



Taft Freshman Academy by **STL Architects** won Best in Class-Educational (K-12) Category in the Brick Industry Association's 2020 Brick in Architecture Awards.



**SmithGroup** recently designed the 25,000-square-foot Downers Grove interior office renovation for Ally Financial. Ally Financial is a national account for SmithGroup, focused on implementing a consistent workplace strategy and design aesthetic nationally.



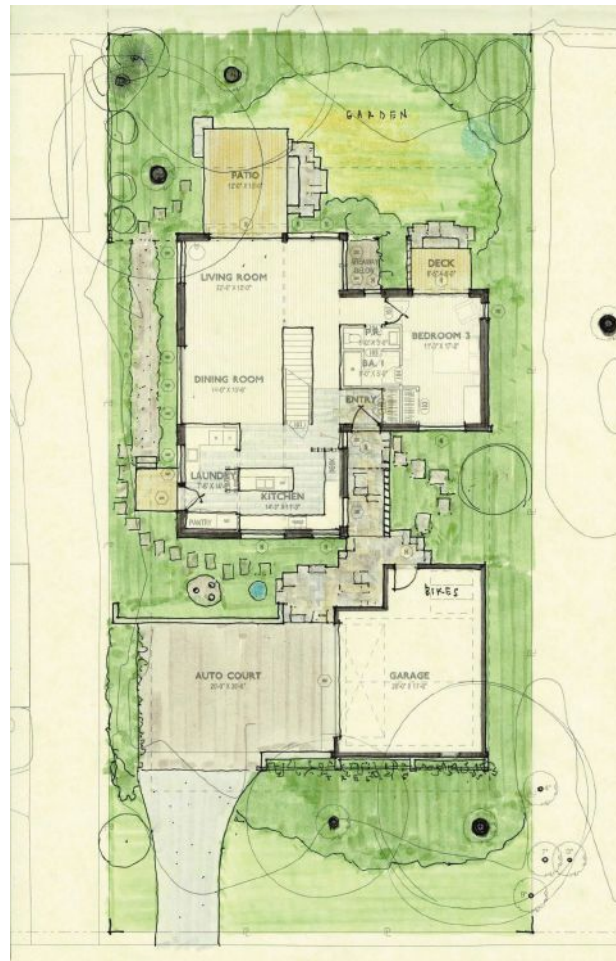
**Ware Malcomb** has completed the Medline Industries Inc. Call Center. Ware Malcomb provided architecture and interior design services for the project.



**Tim Gregg, AIA, ACHA**, will lead SmithGroup's health studio in their Chicago office. Gregg moves into this position following the promotion of Vlad Torskiy to Health Strategist for the firm's national Health Practice.



**Stantec** has completed the new 200,000-square-foot office in the Old Post Office building for Walgreens. Stantec, along with Walgreens in-house development group, handled the architecture, integrated buildings engineering, and interior design services on the renovation and rehabilitation of the project.



TBDA's Lake Bluff Passive House has been PHIUS Certified, making it the firm's sixth certified Passive House project.



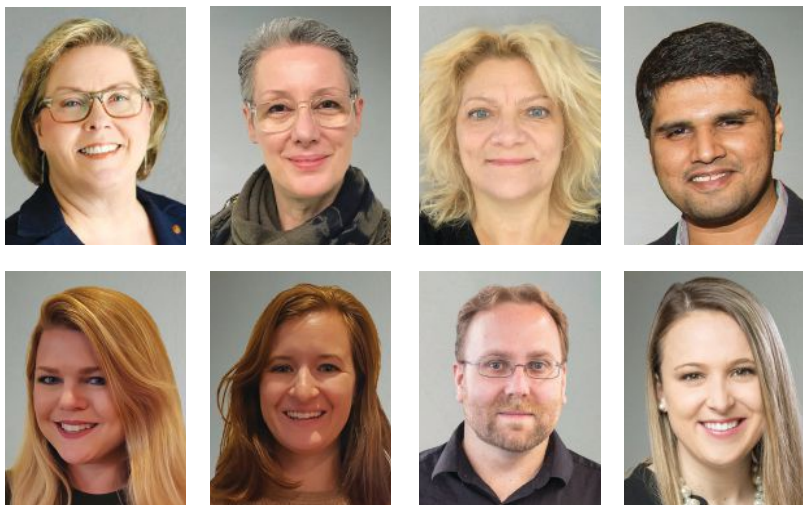
**Patrick Carata, AIA, LEED AP BD+C**, was promoted to Epstein's Architecture's group design director in Chicago.



TBDA welcomed junior staff **Karolina Chojnowska** and **Sarah Aitchison**.



The University of Kentucky College of Design (CoD) unveiled **Studio Gang's** design for the reinvented Reynolds Building. Working in collaboration with Louisville-based Architect of Record **K. Norman Berry Associates**, Studio Gang will transform the century-old tobacco warehouse into a vibrant and interactive learning space for design students.



JLK added eight new hires: **Susan Turner, FAIA, PMP, LEED AP**, lead technical coordinator; **Lise Helene, AIA**, project manager, transportation/civic; **Pattie Sticha, RA, NCIDQ**, senior architect; **Manish Bhayani**, project architect; **Katie McNamee**, project architect; **Heidi Nickel, RA, LEED Green Associate, WELL AP**, project manager, office interiors/labs; **Tony Rielage**, senior marketing coordinator; and **Haley Swanberg**, LEED Green Associate, project architect.



HOK has promoted **Heather Fenniman** to principal in its healthcare practice; **Mike Goetz, AIA**, to principal in its interiors practice; **Sarah Oppenhuizen, AIA**, to principal and management committee member; and **Kimberly Dowdell, AIA**, to marketing principal and management committee member.



Uptown United celebrated a virtual grand opening of their new office in March 2021. **SmithGroup** collaborated with Uptown United to relocate operations in a prominent location that advances the organization's mission of building a unified business environment, facilitating growth, and nurturing a diverse and vibrant community.



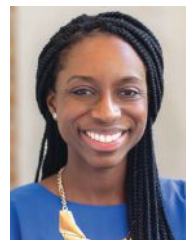
IA Interior Architects designed the new headquarters for Home Chef at the Old Post Office.



Raths, Raths & Johnson, Inc. promoted Lurita McIntosh Blank, NCARB, RBEC, REWC, RRC, RWC, to associate principal.



Lori Day, AIA, LEED, AP, has joined bKL Architecture as director and education practice leader.



Hartshorne Plunkard Architecture promoted Rachel Killion, Assoc. AIA, to senior associate. Killion was the project manager for 905 W. Fulton, the new global headquarters for Mondelez International, and is working on Nashville Warehouse Co., a \$100 million mixed-use project with a timber-framed office component anchored by Live Nation Entertainment.

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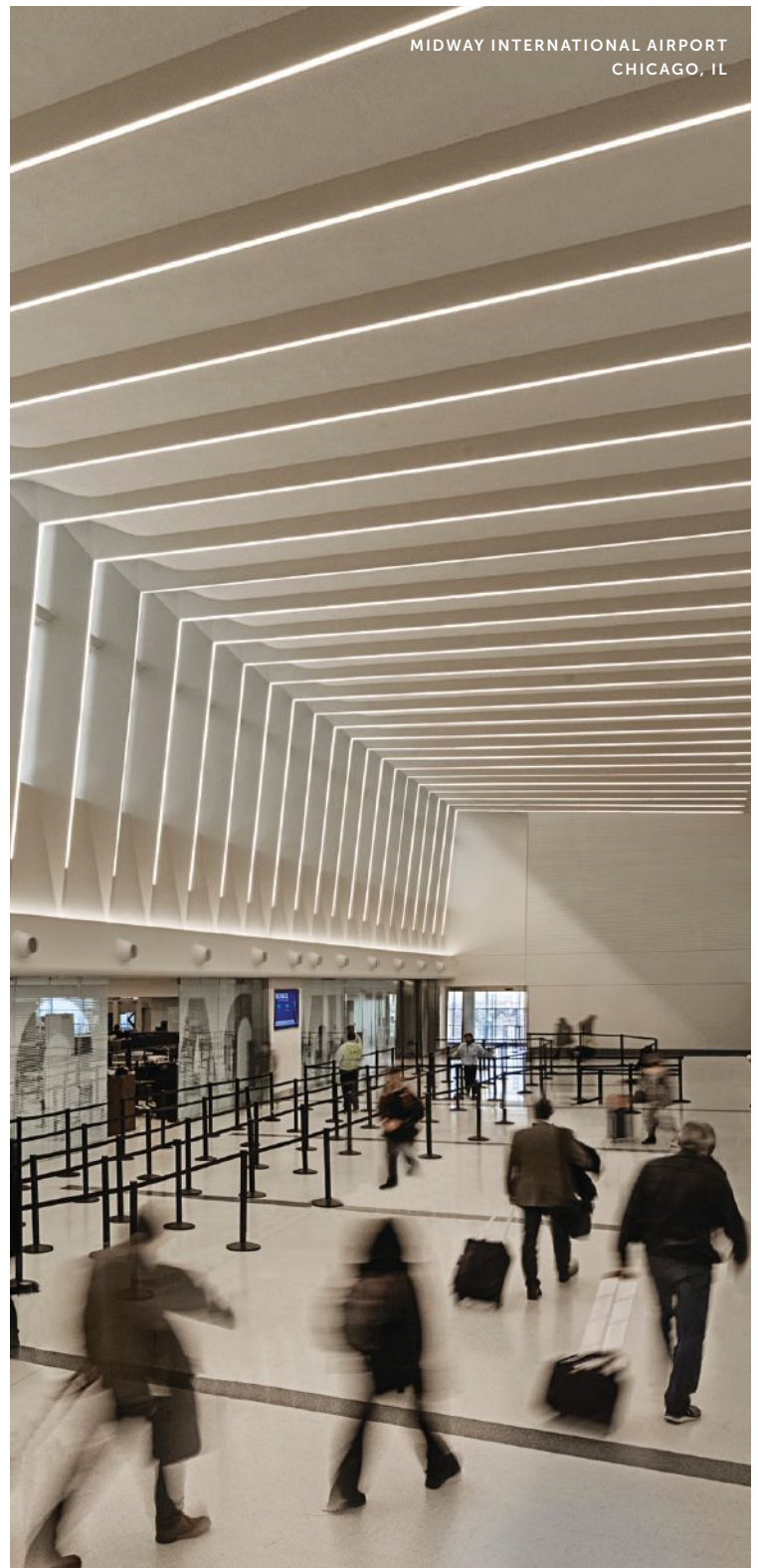
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# small project awards | 2021 jury

Founded by the AIA Chicago Small Practitioners Group and co-presented by the AIA Chicago Area Custom Residential Architects Network, the goal of this award program is to raise public awareness of the value that architects bring to small projects and to promote small practitioners as a resource for design excellence. All projects were designed by firms with 10 or fewer full-time or full-time-equivalent employees at the time of submission.



**Cristina Gallo, AIA**  
*Via Chicago Architects*  
*Chicago, IL*



**Tania Salgado, FAIA**  
*Handprint Architecture*  
*Denver, CO*



**Valentine Schute, AIA**  
*River Architects*  
*La Crosse, WI*

# honor award



## Ardmore House

**Kwong Von Glinow**

**Location:** Chicago, Illinois

**General Contractor:** Oslo Builders, LLC

**Structural Engineer:** Goodfriend Magruder Structure LLC

**MEP Engineer:** Blake Engineering

Bordering an alleyway on a traditional Chicago lot, Ardmore House flips the traditional residential section, arraying bedrooms on the first floor and living spaces on the second. This approach supports

contemporary ways of living, emphasizing communal areas, interconnectivity and flexible live-work spaces that receive ample natural light and engage the surrounding urban context.

A curved double-height interior courtyard atrium runs lengthwise



ALL PHOTOS BY JAMES FLORIO

from the front to back doors, creating a vertical connection between the common areas on the first and second floors. “I was struck by how they superimposed that entrance, how they made that entry sequence work. It clicked all of the boxes,” said one juror.

Defined by a large picture window and a curving wall that leads to each of the bedrooms, the courtyard offers an informal multipurpose area where residents can relax and children can play.

The design of the home calibrates the relationship

between privacy and exposure in this urban site. Off the courtyard’s inner curved wall lie all of the home’s bedrooms, pushed away from the alleyway toward the neighboring lot. A stair tucked behind the courtyard’s curving wall leads to the open-plan second

floor, spatially organized by four trusses overhead. These trusses designate five areas set around the curve of the balustrade: kitchen, island, dining room, powder room and living room. A 56-foot-long ribbon window spans the length of the second level, flooding the

# honor award

space with natural light and offering panoramic views that capture the fullness of the surrounding neighborhood.

The exterior design shifts the façade hierarchy from the street to the alleyway, the most urban of the contexts, and emphasizes the sectional flip of the home.

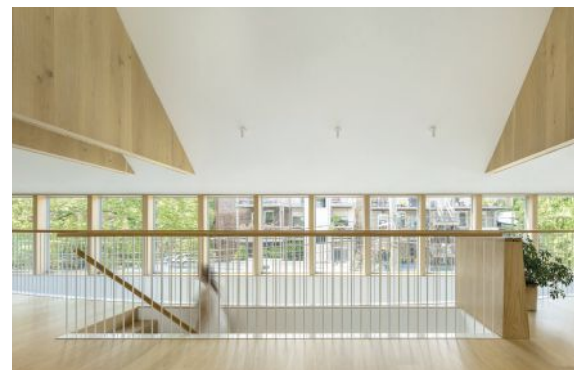
All jurors were particularly taken with Ardmore House, noting not just the home's beauty, but the idea behind the design. "The project comes from the 'what if' question — what if we think of [a] Chicago home with a different parti in mind. What if we let light and ventilation be principles and concepts. The way it opens up to understand the traditional concept of the home with modern details is astounding," said one juror. Added another: "To me, the house is exactly what we're talking about in design excellence and true craftsmanship. Every image tells you there's a whole concept completely supported by the whole space."

## Sustainability Spotlight: Design for Change

The design of this home flexibility accommodates various user types — from individuals, to nuclear families, to collectives with a rentable basement unit. The typology of this home also serves the residential type of co-living, giving the clear distinction of individual shared rooms and the clearly defined shared areas of the home.

The design of the home carefully considered the environment in all aspects of material and systems selection — and often opted for materials with longer lifetimes and local, regulated sourcing to benefit the longevity of the home and environment.

ALL PHOTOS BY JAMES FLORIO





ALL PHOTOS BY TONY SOLURI PHOTOGRAPHY

## Haas Valley Farm

Searl Lamaster Howe Architects

Location: Potosi, Wisconsin

General Contractor: Graney Construction LLC

Tall and thin, the Haas Valley Farm perches on its site, centered in the Driftless Area, a small pocket of the Midwest so named because the glaciers skipped over the region, leaving a surprising landscape of rolling hills and deep valleys bisected by the Mississippi River. The weekend getaway's long and linear exterior stretches across a meadow, offering views down to Grant River on one side and up to a limestone crested ridge on the other.

The house's form is simple yet jogs and intertwines to identify the spaces inside — an element that jurors appreciated. "Overall it has a very clear organization about it. It's a very simple material palette, with clean details, and clear in its diagram," commented one juror.

The stair slice buffers the sleeping and bathing side from the social side of the house, containing a double-story great room whose low roof shoots out to shelter the screened porch. The kitchen is nestled under an upstairs bedroom off the living/dining area, creating a

dramatic change in scale between the spaces. The foyer, also sheltered by a low roof, extends beyond the primary eave, bringing the ceiling lower over the entry bench across from the stair for a more intimate arrival. Jogging forward from the rest of the house to provide a more generous but still modest volume, the primary suite breaks from the south façade, while the main hall and guest suite inhabits the main volume of the house. A narrower roof tops the upper level, which slides into the great-room volume, creating the kitchen and bedroom overlap. All spaces offer views down the valley and up the ridge, with large windows welcoming in the peaceful setting.

"The project feels approachable," said one juror. "It feels like it could belong to anyone in a very friendly way. It fits with the landscaping well and is sensitive to the environment."

## Sustainability Spotlight: Design for Ecology

The position and location of the home was chosen to maximize natural conditioning. Nestling the house at the toe of a bluff shields the home from harsh northern winter winds. The whole house fan and strategic placement of operable windows (including the high windows in the great room) minimize air conditioning needs. The screen porch serves as a de facto summer living room, further reducing the cooling load of the already geothermal house.

# citation of merit

## Hallstar Beauty

### Collective Office

**Location:** Darien, Illinois

**Client:** Hallstar Beauty Headquarters

**Client Representative:** Dove Studios, LLC

**General Contractor:** Helios Construction Services

**Structural Engineer:** Louis Shell Structures

**MEP Engineer:** RTM Engineering Consultants

The client approached Collective Office seeking an architectural solution for a wide range of programmatic needs. Having leased an existing warehouse space with 35-foot ceilings, Hallstar Beauty needed an interior build-out that could accommodate its headquarters. The design narrative was to provide a new corporate work environment to rival its urban counterparts, one where guests, clients and collaborators could experience and understand both the company's production process and brand identity under a single roof.

In order to break up this extremely tall space into a more human scale suitable for an office, the firm created a "little village" comprised of gabled house-shaped volumes that each contain a different office program. This gives each location a unique identity that translates into an exciting interior experience. The gabled volumes produce vaulted interior spaces, creating conference and workspaces that feel open while remaining private. Just outside of the village, we have inserted a mezzanine level. The mezzanine gives more comfortable working conditions for open workstations and offices below, while creating the opportunity for visitors to view the village from above. The mezzanine is accessed by tiered seating that is used for companywide addresses and as an alternate working/lunchtime location.

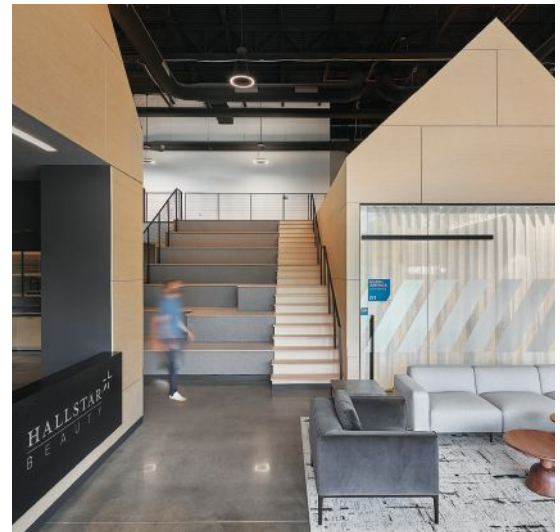
The result is a modern working environment that serves a complete rethinking of how an interior intervention can be used to transform existing



warehouse spaces. The firm believes this project could be a type of adaptive reuse that can be deployed to reinvigorate the common warehouse typology.

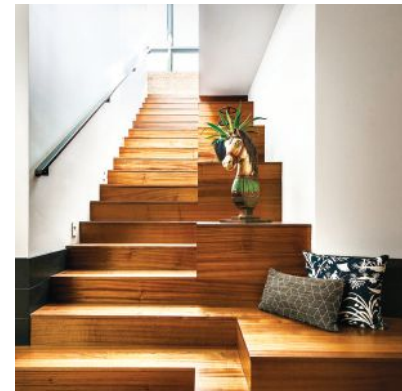
### Sustainability Spotlight: Design for Wellness

The facility was designed with a full gym and change rooms with lockers and showers. The gym overlooks a neighboring nature preserve. We designed private phone booths and a wellness room concept, as well as a lounge with a putting green, shuffleboard and space for adult beverages for after-work hours. The workplace was designed with varying levels of privacy and enclosed workspace, from open tiered seating to the nooks and family-style table in the cafe, and from the huddle rooms and conference room to the open work and private offices. This workplace was designed to accommodate the ability to host however one might want to accomplish their work.



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## The Publishing House Bed and Breakfast

**Nushu, LLC – Kara Boyd, AIA and Krista Petkovsek**

**Location:** Chicago, Illinois

**Design Architect:** Nushu, LLC – Kara Boyd, AIA and Krista Petkovsek  
Co-Leads

**Architect of Record:** Nushu, LLC

**General Contractor:** Vero Design + Build LLC

**Structural Engineer:** AP Engineering PC

**Interior Designer:** Siren Betty Design

The Publishing House Bed and Breakfast is a renovation transformation into an urban bed-and-breakfast in Chicago's West Loop neighborhood. The brief was to revive a disused building and transform it into a boutique home and hospitality venue for weddings and special events, while accommodating 11 guest rooms. Design challenges included working with an unusually deep floor plate, accommodating universal accessibility and integrating the owners' art and vintage artifact collection.


The design intent was to maximize the character and presence of the 110-year-old former publishing house while inserting bespoke modern architectural elements. New wood staircases were inserted into the floor plates to book-end circulation and guest common areas. New skylights over the stairs flood the top floor with natural light and bring it into the deep floor plate below. The stairs double as niches for the vintage artifact collection and extra reading nooks.

Wherever feasible, removed elements from the building were repurposed: new stair treads, shelving and furniture were repurposed from removed old-growth beams; original oak wood paneling was repurposed into headboards; sinks and fixtures were refurbished, sourced from this building or other vintage buildings; the original solid wood floor deck remains. The slender steel frame original to the building was revealed and contributes to the open feel of the floor plate. The exposed steel and rich, robust wood elements recollect the industrial materials of the printing presses once housed here.

## Sustainability Spotlight: Design for Energy

This building's existing envelope is comprised of multi-wythe solid masonry walls (including solid bricks), which slow thermal transfer in the exterior wall. The existing envelope was supplemented with interior insulation and moisture control (via designed space for air circulation) to significantly increase the performance of the envelope. Locally manufactured, efficient windows and glazing replaced the original windows.

With an efficient envelope in place, a hybrid heating and cooling strategy combining radiant floors and a minimally ducted variable refrigerant flow (VRF) system could be employed efficiently. In addition to those systems, electric hot water heating minimizes the need for combustion-fueled appliances and therefore significantly reduces fossil fuel consumption.

A new white membrane roof minimizes heat gain and offsets heat island effects. Proper pointing of the exterior masonry should improve the integrity of the envelope and prolong its low-maintenance life. 

# Modernization of the Chicago Plumbing Code

BY ED FEIBEL, ASSOC. AIA, SENIOR CODE CONSULTANT AT MAP STRATEGIES



Chicago's plumbing code is 20 years old and must be modernized. To keep Chicago competitive in the national market, the permitted plumbing materials need to be updated, gender-neutral toilet rooms must be recognized, and the number of required fixtures ought to be reduced to match national standards. These items have been addressed in a proposed plumbing ordinance prepared by the Department of Buildings. We opened a petition to the Mayor's Office to demonstrate support for its adoption.

Please sign the petition to lend your voice to the message: [chng.it/zhRBcPyJ](http://chng.it/zhRBcPyJ).

Chicago requires cast iron for various plumbing applications in buildings and additionally requires the use of oakum or hemp and liquid lead for open joints, while restricting the use of polyvinyl chloride (PVC). Oakum is a tarred fiber that is packed into the joints and then sealed with molten lead. The oakum expands to make the joint airtight. This is an outdated technique and will no longer be required in the proposed ordinance. Cast iron will still be a required material for taller buildings, as it is a


stronger material and has better acoustic performance.

PVC is beneficial on smaller projects, five stories or less, where the strength of cast iron is not required and the sound transmission can be addressed through insulation. The joints in PVC are simpler, just threaded pipe and glue. Residents and laymen are able to learn to work with PVC without the risk of soldering lead, which could lead to more people joining the plumbing trades.

PVC is cheaper, can be recycled and lasts the life of a building. Additionally, PVC can be preassembled into manifolds before installation,

which allows for more flexible and open designs without the need for complicated pipework and fitting. A pilot program has been run by the Department of Buildings that allows for PVC in four-story residential buildings, which has been a success, with more than 2,500 submittals and a savings of \$38,304,593. The demand is high in the community for this update.

More restaurants are providing gender-neutral toilet rooms in the interest of equality for their patrons. Currently, the Chicago Plumbing Code (CPC) does not recognize gender-neutral toilet rooms in place of the gendered rooms and, if offered, they do not count toward the required fixtures, requiring commercial spaces to either provide them for their customers at the cost of usable square footage or not provide them. Additionally, the proposal will also revise the factors for the calculated number of plumbing fixtures, which will allow for a reduction in the number of required fixtures in many occupancies, allowing for a greater amount of floor area in many spaces and bringing the requirements in line with other municipalities.

Please sign and share this petition before the next City Council meeting so that it can be introduced: [chng.it/zhRBcPyJ](http://chng.it/zhRBcPyJ). For more information, please look up our article "The Cost of Inaction" at [www.map-strategies.com](http://www.map-strategies.com). 



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# Reflections Upon a Return to Chicago

A Conversation Between Jen Masengarb and Catherine Baker

**J**en Masengarb, Assoc. AIA, has taken the helm of AIA Chicago after three years at the Danish Architecture Center. Trained as an architect, her 20-plus year career has been devoted to meaningfully connecting more people of all ages and communities to the built world, advocating for the profession, mentoring and teaching the next generation of designers and serving as a critical bridge between the profession of architecture and the public.

Returning to the City of Big Shoulders from the City of Green Spires, Jen sought out help from friend and AIA Chicago Past President Catherine Baker, FAIA, to hear about how the city has changed in the last three years. They also chatted about Jen's vision for the organization, reflected on a recent cultural exchange with Danish architects and began to tackle how architects become citizen architects.

## **Jen Masengarb, Assoc. AIA:**

The last time we saw each other in person was November 2019, when you were in Copenhagen. You were part of the delegation that the Danish Arts Foundation and the Danish Architecture Center brought over as part of an architectural exchange program. And in the month prior, I brought 20 Danish architects to learn about and with architects in Chicago and Detroit. I haven't spent much time in Chicago over the last three years. And so I thought it would be helpful to have this chat about what I missed.

**Catherine Baker, FAIA:** Of course! First, what brought you back?

**JM:** I am excited about the renewed focus on investment in our city's neighborhoods. The We Will Chicago initiatives coming out of Commissioner Maurice Cox's office and Mayor Lori Lightfoot's Invest



Masengarb and Baker visiting the rehabbed Mark Twain apartments.

CREDIT: STEPHANIE JENSEN

South/West are so positive. And that's in part what drew me back — wanting to be part of that energy, focusing on neighborhoods. We are asking ourselves hard questions about the past: the ways we have disinvested in neighborhoods, specifically neighborhoods of color.

If you look at AIA's membership, nationally, with 2 percent of architects being Black women as just one of many troubling statistics — we must support those architects and partner with our allied organizations who are also engaged in that work.

And there are already so many neighborhood organizations that are working under the radar, who have always been fighting for equity and inclusion. We must continue to ask ourselves: How are we as architects, and as an

organization, working to make our city livable, healthy and equitable?

**CB:** I remember the discussions we had with the visiting Danish architects about the government's role and the role of personal responsibility. From our side, we were envious of how the Danish government supported individuals. But I remember a comment from one of the Danish architects that they felt guilty that if there was an issue, they just assumed their government would take care of it. And that was eye-opening. Being in the United States, in a place like Chicago, having that initiative to solve problems — there are so many organizations, so many individuals who are out there doing the work.

**JM:** The work they saw happening in Chicago and Detroit, they said,

felt more authentic, because — while not every decision in Denmark was a top-down decision — when the funding starts top down, then it has kind of some built-in parameters. When it's coming from the bottom up, there are advantages to that. And I think they saw the authenticity of how architects in Chicago and Detroit are working with communities.

**CB:** You asked me about a few projects that have happened since you left. I always come at it with a lens on affordable housing. So there were a few adaptive reuse projects that have been realized that are huge accomplishments. In Chicago, we seem to not have much of a problem with tearing buildings down. And I think there's a collective memory that gets erased in demolitions.

**JM:** You highlighted the Mark Twain project at Division and Clark — originally designed by Harry Glube and recently renovated by Weese Langley Weese Architects — as a new single-room occupancy (SRO), which won a 2020 Landmarks Award from the Driehaus Foundation through Landmarks Illinois.

**CB:** A lot of the SRO buildings were built back at the turn of the century. As single people moved to Chicago for work, they had an affordable

place to live. And I think we had 3,700 of those, down to maybe 71 of those buildings. So you can imagine the housing stock we have lost, but it's about the people. We lost this whole typology of a living arrangement — a collective memory — of a first step into the city.

**JM:** It would have been so easy to tear it down and build another high-rise there. And then we would have lost that opportunity for 150 residents to have a foothold into secure housing. No architecture is neutral. I think this is a great example of a positive solution. I'm interested to hear about the relatively new mixed-use, Chicago Public Library/senior housing developments by Perkins and Will, John Ronan Architects and SOM. Those were just getting started when I left Chicago. What do you think those tell us also about where the city is headed?

**CB:** That's an interesting typology, because it represents a public-private collaboration in affordable housing. The funding sources often dictate the design, so if you're de-

signing a mixed-use building funded through the typical Low-Income Housing Tax Credit sources, they don't really support mixed-use. In this case, having the city step in and provide financial support was critical to making these about more than just housing.

**JM:** There are many AIA members who are exemplifying what it means to be a citizen architect. I'm interested in ways that our chapter can foster more citizen architects at all levels of their professional growth, but also as neighborhood residents, as parents in a school community, as members of a faith community — with an architectural lens. Do you have thoughts on ways that we might support them?

**CB:** I do. Having been on the AIA Chicago Board of Directors, we did a survey to ask architects: What boards are they on? What organizations do they participate in? The results showed people were on three or four different boards and involved in three or four different organizations. We need to encour-



IMAGE COURTESY OF JEN MASENGARB

Baker (left) with the Danish exchange architects in Chicago.

age people to start where they are, with what they know, at the organizations that they already belong to and use their architect cap to really start having these discussions. We just have to be authentic. When we go into these neighborhoods, if we act like we know the answers, we're going to fail. We just need to listen.

**JM:** I know that struggle of trying to help the public understand the value that architects bring to the creative and problem-solving process. We're trained to solve problems. But one question I am

going to continue to challenge our members with is: When was the last time you had a conversation about architecture with someone who wasn't in your firm or household or wasn't the client? Opening those doors of conversation with those people who we interact with every day is key.

**CB:** Now, that's a fantastic goal for you. And I think you'll find a receptive audience here in Chicago. I know you did wonderful work when you were in Copenhagen and now can come back with a fresher perspective on things. CA

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# In Memoriam

**H**elmut Jahn, FAIA, has been a fixture in Chicago's architecture community for nearly 50 years; his work locally has undeniably changed Chicago itself and has redefined how design excellence plays a role in the shape and texture of our city.

AIA Chicago recognized him with a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012, and we have recognized his firm's work in myriad Design Excellence Awards throughout the years. From his work in Chicago, such as the James R. Thompson Center, campus projects at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) and the University of Chicago, to convention centers in Doha and towering residential buildings in New York City, his firm has created a body of work that is bold and boundary-pushing. He was elevated to Fellowship — AIA's highest distinction — in 1987.

"Echoing Mies van der Rohe's edict, 'Build don't talk,' Helmut Jahn continues Mies' legacy of innovation and design excellence through example. His completed works inform and inspire a new generation of architects to push the envelope even further. Helmut's legacy will endure beyond the buildings he has created through the countless mentees who permeate the profession as firm leaders in Chicago and beyond. Helmut Jahn has truly advanced the art and science of architecture by creating timeless work that continues to inspire through the power of design," said Robert Forest, FAIA.

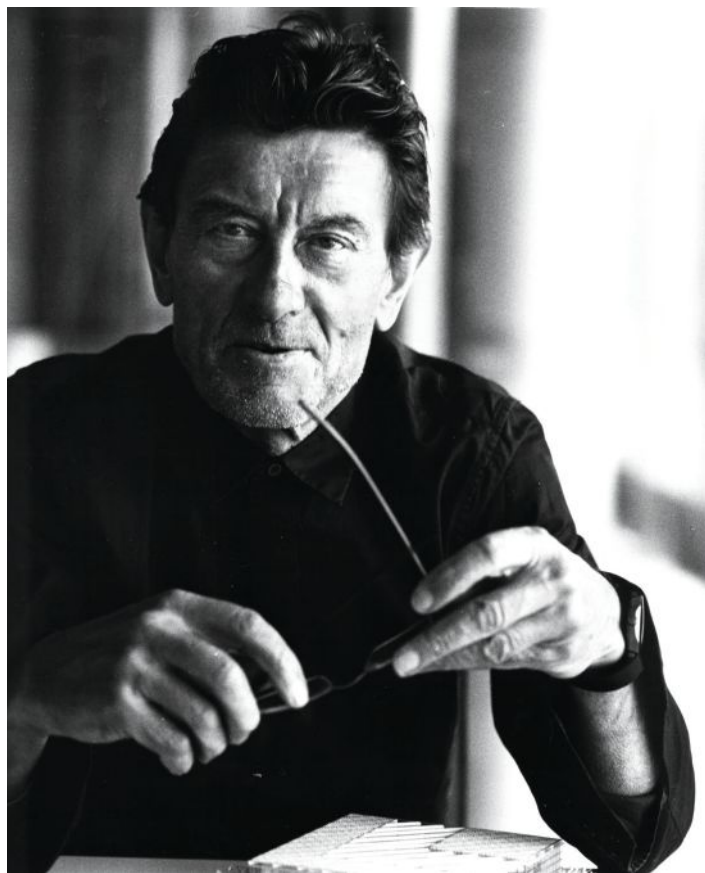



PHOTO BY INGRID VON KRUSE

We are sad to have lost such a fixture in the profession, but we are also grieving the loss of a friend — AIA Chicago has worked in the offices with JAHN at 35 E. Wacker for more than a decade, and his

presence will be missed and treasured. His entire team has been involved in AIA Chicago's success and has volunteered their time to help uplift architects at all stages of their careers, and our thoughts are

with them and Helmut's family and friends.

Franz Schulz penned a beautiful tribute to Helmut on the occasion of his Lifetime Achievement Award, describing his major achievements in architecture and in the profession, beginning from Helmut's youth: "Among the factors that motivated Helmut Jahn, FAIA, to study architecture was the degree of destruction visited upon his hometown of Allersberg, a suburb of Nuremberg, during World War II. Born in 1940, Jahn was old enough to witness the ruination and, no less important, to grow up amid the often low-budget architecture that was erected in Nuremberg following the end of hostilities. Germany did not recover from the war as readily or creatively as it did following World War I. If there was anything that might have pointed toward a successful career as a designer, it would have to rise from within Jahn himself rather than from his environment."

You can watch the video tribute to Helmut Jahn's legacy, produced by our friends at Black Spectacles, at [www.aiachicago.org](http://www.aiachicago.org). 

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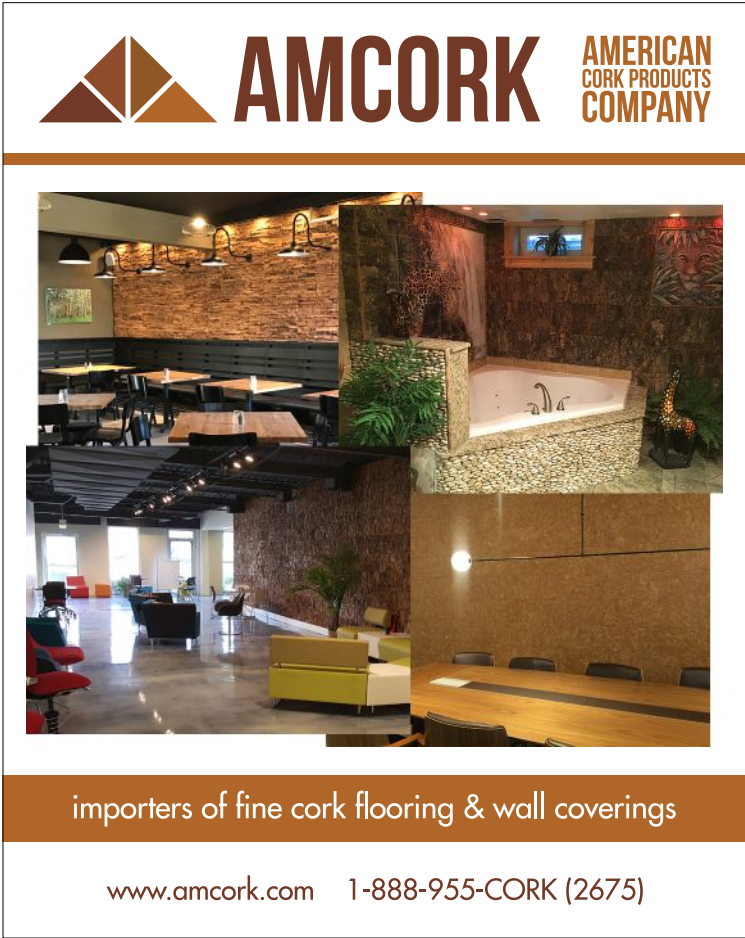
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