

WAA's 15th Anniversary: A Party at The Bobst Library; Johnson, Foster Honored

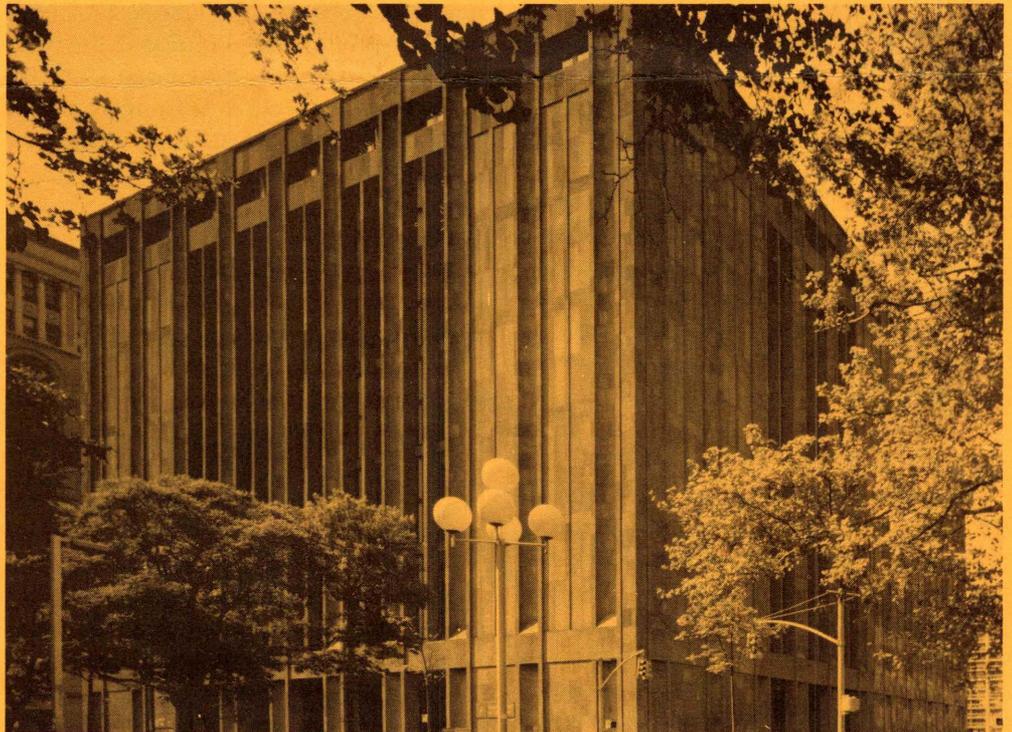
The NYC/AIA and its Auxiliary have invited the architectural community and its friends to a gala party celebrating the WAA's 15th anniversary.

The recently dedicated Elmer Holmes Bobst Library at New York University, designed by Philip Johnson, FAIA, and Richard Foster, has been selected as the site. The WAA Scholarship Fund will benefit from the party, to be held January 30, 1974, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

The occasion marks the first time that the Library will be open to the public as a benefit. Guests will tour "behind-the-scenes," with library staff as guides. There will be a reception honoring Mr. Johnson and Mr. Foster, and a special exhibit of the papers of Robert Frost from the NYU collection. Mr. Johnson will speak. An orchestra will keep your toes tapping. Wines and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

The Bobst Library is "the only major research library to have been built in New York City for over 35 years." It was designed and constructed over a ten-year period. The twelve-story structure is located at 70 Washington Square South at the southeast corner of Washington Square.

Honorary Chairmen of the evening will be: Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Holmes Bobst; Mr. and Mrs. Saul Edelbaum; NYU President James H. Hester and Mrs. Hester; The Hon. Edward I. Koch, U.S. Congressman, 18th C.D.;



The Hon. William Passannante, N.Y. State Assemblyman; National AIA President Archibald Rogers, FAIA, and Mrs. Rogers; and N.Y.S. Dormitory Authority Executive Director William Sharkey and Mrs. Sharkey.

Mrs. David Paul Helpert is WAA Benefit Chairman.

Committee heads include: Mrs. Charles Edward Baskett, Mrs. John Shober Burrows, Mrs. David Eng, Mrs. Irwin J. Feifer, Mrs. John G. Foti, Mrs. J. Arvid Klein, Mrs. Vincent S. LaGanga, Mrs. Ralph S. Leff, Mrs. Jan Hird Pokorny, Mrs. Richard

Roth, Jr., Mrs. Richard R. Scherer, Mrs. R. Jackson Smith, and Mrs. Robert L. Thorson assisted by Mrs. Michael Maas and Mrs. Roger Gilbert Spross.

Tickets to the event are \$15.00 each, sponsors \$50 (four tickets), patrons \$100 (eight tickets), benefactors \$200 and up (fifteen tickets). All contributions are tax exempt. Checks are payable to the WAA Scholarship Fund and should be mailed to: Mrs. David Paul Helpert, WAA Scholarship Fund Benefit, 99 Park Avenue, New York City 10016. The benefit telephone number is 736-1286.

Chapter Plays Role in State Association Proposed Changes

Last summer, the Executive Board of the N.Y. Chapter presented to the Board of Directors of the NYSAA a list of proposals to "increase the effectiveness" of the State Association. Portions subsequently were presented successfully on the Convention floor in October (leading at least one observer to conclude that miracles indeed do happen).

The most important of the resolutions—with regard to the State Association's future—was the authorizing of a Special Committee to act as a "sounding board," investigating the attitudes of all the members not only towards the Association but towards the various proposed changes. These changes would deal with a redefinition of the NYSAA's purpose, emphasizing legislative lobbying. They would also include a greater liaison with State Agencies and greater monitoring of other State programs, such as licensing.

The Special Committee, which includes officers of the State Association, will consider recommendations on the composition of the Board of Directors, the reassigning of some chapters' districts and will make a study of the efficiency of the Headquarter's operations. This latter will mean exploring the feasibility of a relocation to Albany, a reappraisal of their publications (The Empire State Architect and the Newsletter), a view of the redundant nature of some committees and, of course, the efficacy of the State Convention.

The Convention has come under fire from some members recently. Their view: three days of play could easily be condensed into one of serious business. Minus exhibitors.

The N.Y. Chapter (with the muscle power which comes from having 50% of the State membership), was also vocal on other issues:

Two resolutions concerning the Status of Women in the profession were passed. One of these elimi-

nated sex discrimination in future NYSAA documents, publications and announcements. But more far reaching and inspired (to this writer, anyway) was the proposed advertising campaign to be directed at parents "suggesting they encourage their daughters" to enter the field of architecture.

The N.Y. Chapter's proposals to help improve the State Association were the result of work by Larry Litchfield, Michael Maas, John Jansson, George Lewis and former **Oculus** Editor Kurt Karmin (KK). It is now apparent that the Chapter's view of their neglected "country cousins" is soon to be rectified.

LY

Executive Committee Actions

November 14, 1973

- Appointed James Baker and Alexander Kouzmanoff as delegates to the Fine Arts Federation through 1976.

- Established a Committee on Architecture for Criminal Justice to correspond to one recently established by the NYSAA.

- Established an ad hoc committee on political contributions to consider implementation of the Institute's recent revision of its Ethical Standards.

- Appointed James I. Freed to be Chapter representative on the Concrete Industry Board.

- Established a Committee on Employee-Employer Relations, with Ralph Steinglass as Chairman. The nucleus of this committee is a present Office Practice subcommittee.

- Approved the recommendation of the Scholarship Committee, James Doman, Chairman, that it review applications of minority students for financial assistance and decide on the awards.

- Resolved to support the efforts of the N.Y. Coalition to Save Housing.

Welcome to New Members

The NYC/AIA welcomes the following members:

Corporate

William B. Hess
Joseph W. Griffin

Candidates for Membership

Information received by the Secretary of NYC/AIA regarding the qualifications of candidates for membership will be considered confidential.

Corporate

Henry H. Brennan
James A. Cannilla
Horst C. Elzer
Jan Joseph Kalas
Michael John Koenen
Damiano G. Maruca
Mauro E. Mujica
Helmut Walter Scholze
Peter H. Semrad

Professional Associate

Pieter Kramer

Associate

Robert Lenz

New York Chapter
The American Institute of Architects
20 West 40th Street
New York, New York 10018
212/565-1866
George S. Lewis, Executive Director

Executive Committee
T. M. Prentice, Jr., President
Herbert B. Oppenheimer, 1st Vice President
Samuel M. Brody, Vice President
Alexander Kouzmanoff, Vice President
Kurt Karmin, Secretary
James B. Baker, Treasurer
Louis P. Giacalone, Director
Anna M. Halpin, Director
J. Arvid Klein, Director
Bernard Rothzeit, Director
Walter A. Rutes, Director
LeRoy E. Tuckett, Director

Oculus Committee
David Paul Helpern, Editor and Chairman
Bonnell Irvine
Norman F. Jacklin
Carl Meinhardt
William B. North
Martin Pitt
Daniel Rodriguez
Margaret Esme Simon
Linda Yang

Tom Galvin, Walfredo Toscanini, Run for Public Office

Two Chapter members projected their convictions on urban planning into the political arena in campaigns this Fall. Tom Galvin, whose efforts in seeking the high office of N.Y. City Council President are widely known (but not as well understood as they should have been—see his comments below), piled up 442,000 votes, running fourth among ten major party candidates for city-wide office. And Walfredo Toscanini was elected to the New Rochelle City Council.

Toscanini ran as a team with fellow Democrat Thomas O'Toole, and they gave their party a 3-2 majority in this normally Republican city. In five months of door-to-door campaigning, they visited 7500 homes apiece and estimate they met 85% of the electorate. They advocated professionalism in government, and Toscanini was convinced this was the only way to turn around a deteriorated center city with 60 empty stores downtown.

Tom Galvin has submitted the following comments on his experience:

"The initial conclusion a candidate for city-wide office reaches is that our system of electing officials must change. The time spent campaigning is too long and the cost of elections is far beyond the scope of the ordinary citizen. To reach the electorate in an urban center as large as New York requires a huge expenditure of money for advertising on radio, TV, bus, subway, newspaper, direct mailing, and for telephone canvassing, headquarters, and all the other trappings.

"The amount of money required would be significantly minimized if radio, TV and newspapers cooperated with the candidates in bringing the issues before the electorate. One

of the shocking realizations was that the media was uninterested in the basic issues. Furthermore, the media made a conscious decision not to focus on the campaign for the two "lesser" offices of Comptroller and City Council President. I say shocking because, in the wake of Watergate, one would fully expect the media to be leading the fight for public discussion and electoral reform.

"I found fund-raising alien to my nature and difficult, and now, at the end of the campaign, I find myself with a significant campaign debt. If the civic leaders of the country, and in this category I include the architectural profession, do not insist upon a massive electoral reform, the lesson of Watergate will have been for naught.

"During the campaign, I presented a proposal for future municipal elections in New York City to be funded by a tax check-off of \$1.88 per registered voter, with a tax credit system to give underprivileged individuals equal status. This would to a significant extent eliminate the power and influence of special interest groups.

"Despite all the handicaps I was forced to face in this election, running as a Republican in the year of Watergate, I was still able by dint of a shoe-leather campaign to garner 442,000 votes. But I am thoroughly disillusioned because of the inability, due to lack of media coverage, to articulate during the campaign those planning issues that I considered important for future urban development in New York City."

GL

A Meeting with Abe Beame

Last October 17th candidate Abe Beame met with seven representatives of the Chapter, led by President Tim Prentice.

At a meeting on October 2 at Pace College sponsored by the AIA and other organizations, Mr. Beame had said architects had lost the old freedom to design because of the intrusion of the planning commission. The Chapter representatives spoke strongly in favor of the new programs of the planning commission and told Mr. Beame that architects had much greater freedom to design for the good of the City through innovative zoning regulations such as special districts.

Mr. Beame seemed considerably impressed by this point of view, but it was agreed by all present that it would be desirable to codify the new zoning so that arbitrary interpretations and uncertainty could be minimized.

Also discussed was the question of architectural work being done "in house" by city agencies as opposed to consultants. The desirability of appointing architects to certain city positions was stressed, with particular reference to the current vacancy on the planning commission.

He said this was his first meeting of this kind with a group of architects and that he would be pleased to meet again.

The Portable Portfolio

Like Gaul, what seems to be a recent confusion of minority scholarship programs can be best understood by dividing them into three parts: the New York Chapter Minority Scholarship Fund, the National AIA Minority Scholarship Program hereafter referred to as the Institute's Program, and the fund-raising activities of the Women's Architectural Auxiliary of the NYC/AIA, which we know as the WAA.

First. To maintain the Equal Opportunities Scholarship Program which began in 1963, the Chapter voted in the spring of 1971 to assess the membership as a source of funds. The yield from this assessment—through Chapter dues—is about \$100,000 over a five-year period. This is the only membership assessment for scholarship funds.

Last year the Chapter contributed \$17,500 in scholarship monies in block grants to the four New York Area architectural schools: City College, Columbia, Cooper Union, and Pratt Institute. Disbursement of the funds was completely at the discretion of the Schools once they received the money.

However, plans for this year's increased allocation of \$22,000 call for a committee composed of Chapter members, architectural school officials and students which will award stipends of \$500 each directly to 44 students. Repeat: this program is funded through membership assessment.

Second. The Institute's Minority Scholarship Program was begun in 1970 with an allocation of \$500,000 that was matched by the Ford Foundation. This money was used for a structured program in which students entering architectural school over a three-year period were to be financially assisted all through school.

To continue *this* program, there is now a major national fund-raising campaign. Max Abramovitz is chairman for the New York Region, and Saul Edelbaum is chairman for the New York Chapter. Chapter members have received correspondence concerning contributions for this national drive. This is not funded through assessment.

Third. The WAA, that intelligent group of lively, dedicated and enterprising women, have extraordinarily managed to raise since 1958 nearly \$150,000 for architectural scholarships to help more than 400 architectural students. Three years ago all WAA scholarship funds went to the Chapter's Minority Scholarship Program. As the Chapter began its membership assessment and gained independent strength, the WAA has been able to shift back its contributions directly to the four New York Area architectural schools.

Characterizing this organization's lofty ideals, the Charter of the WAA reveals that funds may be raised for "educational, literary, or scientific purposes." We may be sure that this creative group of women is about to expand its fund-raising horizons.

Repeat again. Only the New York Chapter's Minority Scholarship Program is funded through assessment.

I seem to find myself in three parts...
NJ

Special Madison Avenue District is Proposed Between 61st and 96th Sts.

The City Planning Commission has approved the establishment of a Madison Avenue Preservation District. As stated in the Calendar of the Commission, the General goals are as follows:

- (a) To preserve and protect the architectural quality and unique character of Madison Avenue and its surrounding areas;
- (b) To preserve and enhance street life by promoting specialty shops at the street level;
- (c) To introduce amenities relating to the residential character of the area; and
- (d) Promote the most desirable use of land in this area and thus to conserve the value of land and buildings and thereby protect the City's tax revenues.

This proposed amendment to the Zoning Resolution would limit the height of new development to the scale of existing buildings; mandate continuous ground floor development of appropriate shops and stores; and require usable recreation space at ground and rooftop levels.

A unique feature of the district is the elimination of the plaza bonus. This is essential to meeting the objective of preserving the continuity and character of retail frontage and active street life along the Avenue. Empty plazas can disrupt that vital retail continuity.

The elimination of the plaza bonus would also eliminate the chance of increasing building bulk by the 20 percent bonus granted for plazas under existing regulations in high density residential areas. Elimination of the possibility for the higher bulk is considered particularly useful along Madison Avenue, which is only eighty feet wide, in contrast to most other major avenues and crosstown

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Participatory Democracy at Pratt

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streets with high density residential development, which are at least one hundred feet wide. However, builders with plans on file by May 31, 1973, would be permitted the bonus... without providing a plaza... as long as all other requirements of the district were met.

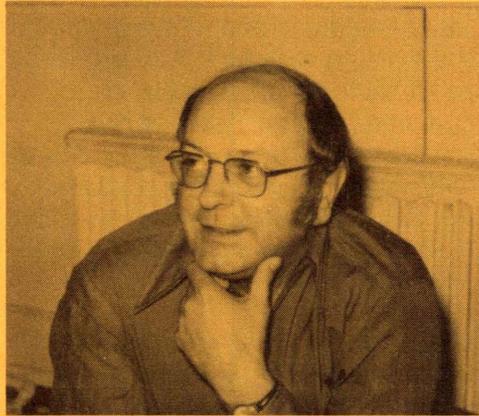
In conjunction with the exclusion of the plaza bonus and the requirement of providing retail frontage along Madison Avenue, all new structures would have to be built to the lot line. Building height would be limited to approximately 18 stories and more ground level coverage would be allowed. The resulting structures would conform generally to existing neighborhood patterns.

Compensating for the more extensive coverage, small park areas would be required to be developed at the rear of the building. In addition, rooftop recreation space for tenants would be mandated. The street scene would also be enhanced by landscaping requirements calling for the planting of trees with at least a six inch caliper every twenty-five feet along the Madison Avenue frontage of all new development.

Charles E. Hughes, chairman of the NYC/AIA Zoning Committee, has presented the Chapter's endorsement to the City Planning Commission and has testified in support of the amendment at the Oct. 23 open hearing.

This zoning change is entered in the Board of Estimate Calendar. Approval is likely and imminent.

BI



Alan Forrest

After three strikes and five deans in the last four years, there is new calm at Pratt Institute's School of Architecture. And in spite of his disbelief in the star system, one man, Alan Forrest is responsible. Mr. Forrest is the new Director of the School of Architecture. He is fiercely committed to democracy and to Pratt's experiment in administration by democracy. The uniqueness of the man, the uniqueness of the method of his selection as director, and the uniqueness of the administrative system have combined to inspire confidence in Alan Forrest and in the fact that the quality of architectural education will be improved under his directorship.

In the spring of 1972, as a solution to the problems that plagued the school, a doctrine of governance was drafted. It set up a democratic system of government in which administration, faculty and students each had a voice. Paralleling the American Constitution, this doctrine defined a method by which three distinct factions could work in concert through a system of checks and balances to run the school.

Everyone at Pratt is responsible to the prime governing organ, The School Council. It is composed of twenty members—five administrators (including the Director), five faculty members, five students, and five professionals. All policy decisions are made at their weekly meetings.

Greater involvement of the student body is sought through four student subcommittees (workshops). Subcommittee men and women work in the "resource center" where students can use the reference library, learn about school government and feed back their ideas into the system.

Obviously, a conventional Dean would not succeed in the new system. As one Pratt student put it, "Dean" sounds too much like "Dictator." So it was decided to look for a "Director," and in the winter of 1972 a search committee was created. It was composed of students, faculty members and two professionals—Thomas F. Galvin and Judith Edelman. The search committee advertised nationally for a person "who would be willing to work with faculty and students in a more responsive form of governance requiring energy and dedication." Two rounds of interviews by the committee—and a school-wide interview and election culminated in Alan Forrest's appointment.

Director Forrest, who describes himself as a "Mid-Atlantic Man," comes to Pratt from Scotland via England and the University of California. He is marvelously good-humored, optimistic, and hard-working. And as he begins his directorship, "optimism" describes the mood at Pratt. "Hard work" describes the participatory democracy through which he and the school have elected to govern themselves.

MES

\$1,000,000,000.00

And The Highway on The River

Most people know that something is happening to the West Side Highway. It is falling apart. It is partially closed for repair. Some people at UDC a few years ago made a proposal for its rebuilding. And currently somebody else has some other things underway.

The West Side Highway is one of the more forgettable features of New York's central business district. It is there, and we all use it. Somehow we think it will always be there, if only because it has been there for such a long time.

As architects we know that in this complex city, it is often impossible to identify the real issues of the day. Even the local AIA, while serving as a forum and a clearing house for relevant professional concerns, is not expected to require one's attention and commitment when one is simply too busy on a project.

The other evening at Chapter Headquarters, opponents and proponents of the West Side Highway Project presented their positions to a very poor turnout. The dozen people who came learned: It's going to cost at least a billion dollars (first estimate). It will be a multi-lane Interstate Highway (cars as well as trucks and buses) running from somewhere around 70th Street down to Battery Park.

Five alternatives were presented by the Project's director, Lowell K. Bridwell. The first proposal would have the road running in a series of tunnels and depressions at the edge of a newly extended river bulkhead. The newly created land above would be zoned for residential use.

The second proposal is for a new structure in the existing right of way, elevated except for the section adjacent to Greenwich Village which would be depressed and decked over. A third proposal would be to

simply maintain and minimally modify the existing structure. A fourth would be to have the existing structure completely renovated and reconstructed. The last would eliminate the limited-access interstate road and replace it with a local arterial surface road accompanied with public rapid transit.

In addition to these alternatives, Mr. Bridwell discussed the need for the Project and the reasons for treating the road, in four of the five proposals, as a limited-access highway.

The opponents, Community Planning Boards 2, 7 and 9, represented by John Belle of Beyer, Blinder, Belle, consultants to the Boards, presented their position. Their major objection is the agreement between the City and State which led to the Project's formation, calling for land planning in the entire West Side corridor. The opponents interpret this as a mandate to do land planning for a major portion of the West Side rather than only the narrow aisle immediately adjacent to the new highway. In any case, they believe that having any highway determine land use is akin to having the tail wag the dog.

Basic attitudes toward the needs for regional transportation were seen by the opponents as the proper context for considering the Highway proposal. Both parties agree that definitive information about these needs is desirable.

But... Can the State and City agree to a project, make a plan and simply have it happen? Are they really capable of dealing with this kind of enormous project, organizing tasks, establishing criteria, juggling needs and desires of community and business factions, and making decisions which could result in real growth and amenities for all? What is the desirability of new and larger highways in any urban center? Should a com-

munity participate in this process without any ability to ask questions or have a right to veto? These kinds of issues are central to our ideas of how our City should survive, grow, and have its fabric enhanced and strengthened.

We have all been bumper to bumper up on the West Side Highway deck. We may vaguely sense that the time of change for this wornout elevated is somewhere in the near future. As design professionals we can imagine the effect of a billion dollars of construction right here in town.

But what part should we play in all this? The New York Chapter was able to get the City to act on our professional advice and add provision for pedestrian access to the river to an East Side medical center development. Imagine the impact we could possibly have on determining the course of this extraordinary project.

CM

Wanted: Award Winners

An exhibit of all past design award winners is presently being planned by the Small Office Practice Committee. However, since it unfortunately turns out that Chapter headquarters does not have the winners on record for the years 1962, 1965, 1967 and 1968, it has been requested that these winners or others who might know of their identity please step forward and contact Dick Metzner at 563-5207.

Bold Vistas Await

Now is the time to apply for the Stewardson Traveling Scholarship. Applications are ready at Chapter Headquarters. The announcement about the award arrives with this month's **Oculus**. Employers are urged to post it and to encourage employees to apply.