



# CANALUS

6

The Casa and the Convent

9

Baratloo-Balch Profile

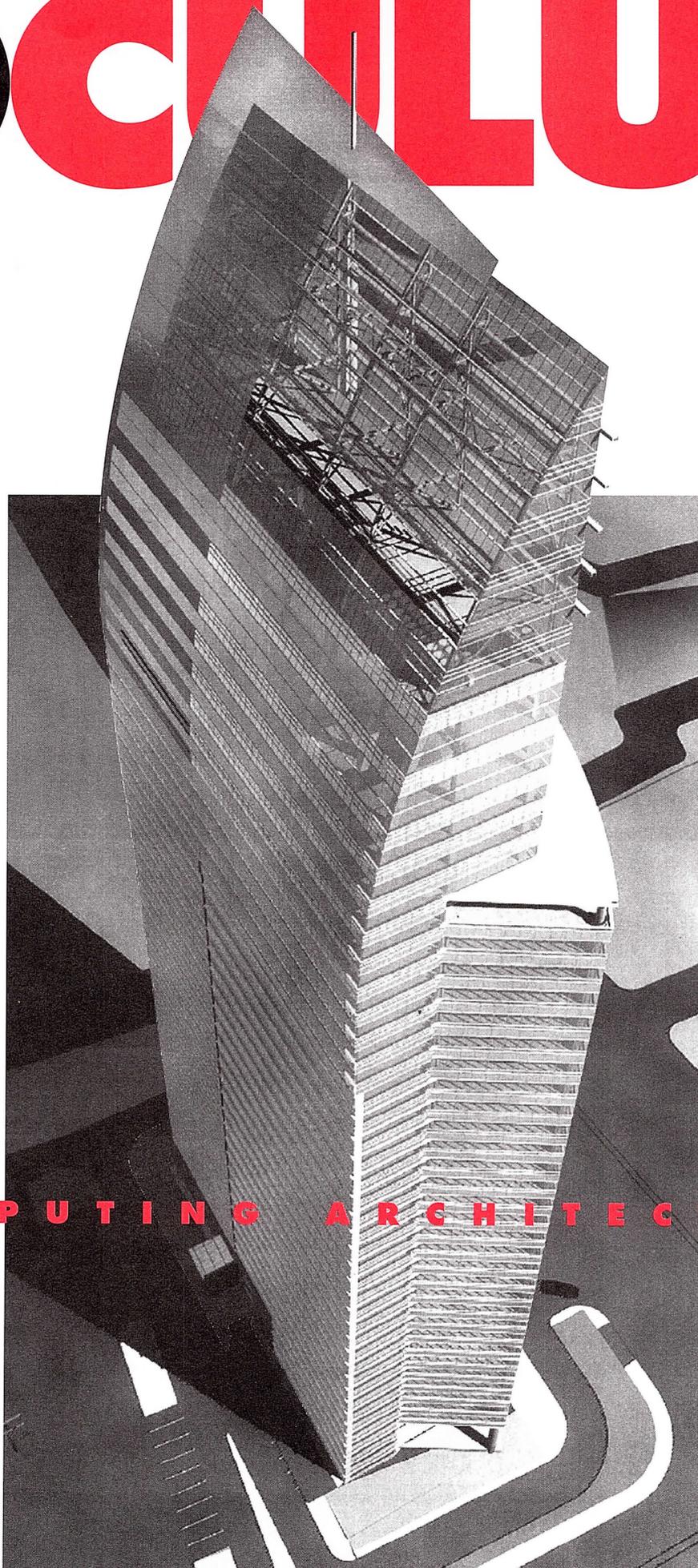
13

Kenneth Frampton's *Studies in Tectonic Culture*

16

The Return of Venturi

COMPUTING ARCHITECTURE



Karet Office Tower  
Jakarta  
Indonesia

Ellerbe Becket  
Rendering:  
Jonathan Ward

**Volume 58, Number 9, May 1996**

Editor: Jayne Merkel  
 Copy Editor: Noel Millea  
 News Editor: Nina Rappaport  
 Contributing Editor: Todd W. Bressi  
 Managing Editor: Kira Gould  
 Assistant Editors: Amy Lamberti  
 and Johnathan Sandler  
 Art Direction and Production:  
 Cathleen Mitchell, McRoberts Mitchell  
 Design Consultant, Cover Design:  
 Michael Gericke, Pentagram  
 Staff Photographer: Dorothy Alexander

**American Institute of Architects  
 New York Chapter**

200 Lexington Avenue  
 New York, New York 10016  
 212-683-0023  
 email: aiany@way.com

**Board of Directors 1996**

Jerry A. Davis, FAIA, *President*  
 Robert Geddes, FAIA,  
*President-Elect/First Vice President*  
 Deborah Berke, AIA, *Vice President*  
 Walter A. Hunt, Jr., AIA, *Vice President*  
 Edward Mills, AIA, *Vice President*  
 Linda Yowell, AIA, *Secretary*  
 Robert S. Buford, Jr., AIA, *Treasurer*  
 Drew Greenwald, AIA, *Director*  
 Jeffrey Murphy, AIA, *Director*  
 Li Chung Pei, AIA, *Director*  
 Raymond Plumey, AIA, *Director*  
 Marion Weiss, AIA, *Director*  
 Patricia Forero, Associate AIA,  
*Associate Director*  
 James D'Agostino, AIA, *Public Director*

**Oculus Committee**

Harley Swedler, AIA, *Chair*  
 Carol Clark  
 Jerry A. Davis, FAIA  
 Steven M. Davis, AIA  
 Walter A. Hunt, Jr., AIA  
 Suzanne O'Keefe, AIA  
 Terrence O'Neal, AIA

**Chapter Staff and Services**

Carol Clark, Executive Director (ext. 13)  
 William Gray, Membership (ext. 18)  
 Judith Rowe, Committee Programs (ext. 17)  
 Stephen Suggs, Bookkeeper (ext. 19)  
 Johnathan Sandler, Executive Assistant (ext. 16)  
 Advertising (ext. 12)  
 RSVP for Chapter Programs (ext. 21)  
 ©1996 The American Institute of Architects  
 New York Chapter. All rights reserved.  
 Reproduction in whole or in part without  
 written permission is strictly prohibited.

*Oculus*, published ten times a year,  
 September through June, is a benefit of  
 AIA New York Chapter membership. Public  
 membership is \$60. A year's subscription  
 to *Oculus* is \$40. Send a check and your  
 mailing address to *Oculus* subscriptions,  
 AIA New York Chapter, 200 Lexington  
 Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

For more information on professional  
 and public memberships, please call the  
 Chapter at 683-0023, ext. 18.

Advertise in *Oculus*! Rates are reasonable  
 and readership is extensive. Contact the  
 Chapter for more information.

The views expressed in *Oculus* are not  
 necessarily those of the Board of Directors  
 or staff of the AIA New York Chapter. With  
 the exception of the material appearing  
 under the title "Around the Chapter," this  
 publication is produced by the *Oculus*  
 editorial team.

# News

from the executive director, Carol Clark.

Now that we don't have *Progressive*

*Architecture* to question what the AIA

means to architects, New York Chapter leadership is asking anew what can enhance the value of membership. President-elect Robert Geddes, FAIA, is launching a "Young Architects" Committee to address the needs of those who have just passed the licensing exam. The Membership Committee, led by Board member Jeffrey Murphy, AIA, is broadening this initiative by reaching out to designers still facing the exam, and to the nine architecture schools in the New York region. Geddes has written to the deans of each of these schools, and is organizing meetings to air concerns about the gap between the current practice of architecture and the education of architects.

The AIA New York Chapter is pressing AIA National for a dues reduction program.

We believe that a staggered dues system, which offers those starting out in the profession an opportunity to join at reduced fees, would attract substantial interest. Terrence McDermott, executive vice president and CEO of AIA National, has promised to examine this subject in the coming months, and he assures the AIA New York Chapter that it will remain an active participant in discussions about dues.

Thanks to the organizational talents of Sarelle T. Weisberg, FAIA, the AIA New

York Chapter has organized a senior roundtable. Seasoned veterans of the Chapter's affairs will assist staff in making current Chapter events more appealing to a broad audience. More than a dozen venerable Chapter members turned out for the first senior roundtable luncheon, and plans are afoot to involve the Chapter veterans in welcoming new members.

Another major focus of the Chapter's leadership is on professional practice issues.

Recent forums on the new seismic code in New York City, and on operations, financial management, liability, and contract issues have drawn sizable audiences. During the past 18 months, with Michael Plottel, AIA, leading the effort as chairman, the Professional Practice Committee has made major contributions to ensure that the Chapter membership is well informed about a wide range of practice issues.

Finally, in an effort to better serve all members, the Chapter is expanding its job

bank program. In April, members received a form that can be completed and faxed to the Chapter when employment opportunities at their firms exist. Many prospective employees visit the Chapter and request job bank information. We are hopeful that we can expand our information base and become a more effective employment clearinghouse for the architectural community.

**Industrious Designs**

by *Nina Rappaport*

**W**ell-considered and innovative industrial buildings are rare in the New York region these days. The recently completed Chanel Industrial Complex by **Platt Byard Dovell Architects**, who won the invited competition in 1990, shows how an industrial complex can be transformed by an elegant design.

Chanel, Inc.'s buildings, scattered over a site in Piscataway, New Jersey, were in desperate need of modernization, expansion, and consolidation. PBD created 152,000 square feet of new additions and renovated 356,000 square feet of existing buildings. The complex, which straddled a four-lane highway, then needed to be united functionally and aesthetically.

Platt Byard Dovell's solution was to design a 240-foot-long, 20-foot-high bridge to handle both pedestrian traffic and product distribution. On the lower level, a reversible pallet conveyor extends from the manufacturing area on one side to the 50-foot-high warehouse on the other. The upper pedestrian level is enclosed with glass, with cylindrical circulation towers at the ends, recalling chateaux turrets.

A custom curtain wall of white honeycomb metal panels, extruded aluminum structural mullions, three types of insulating glass panels, and beige stucco wraps the complex for 3,400 linear feet. The forms and colors refer to Chanel's packaging — white and beige with a horizontal black strip.

The alterations of the existing distribution center — light manufacturing, operations, R & D facilities, new lobbies,

seven lab spaces with two six-foot-wide light monitors, offices, a high-bay, high-density semiautomated warehouse, and cafeteria — all had to be completed without interrupting factory production.

PBD also designed Chanel's new 17-story fashion division headquarters, currently under construction on 57th Street.

**Education Upgrades**

Schools and colleges in the New York region are undergoing a little building boom with new upgrades, additions, and master plans. **Mitchell/Giurgola Architects** recently received the commission to complete a master plan for Teachers College at Columbia University. The project includes the modernization of 650,000 square feet of academic and administrative space, as well as conceptual designs for the renovation of the main hall. M/G is also completing a strategic development plan to analyze future growth at the Brooklyn campus of Long Island University. And Onondaga Community College in Syracuse hired M/G to design a \$35 million applied technology center. The project will include technology laboratories and classrooms, where local industries such as Ford Motor Company, the Carrier Corporation, and Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation can collaborate to foster economic development in central New York. In addition, M/G received the commission to reconfigure educational facilities abroad for the Department of Defense Dependent Schools program; the firm's first project will be at the naval base in Rota, Spain.

Mitchell/Giurgola is also turning 660 First Avenue into medical offices and labs for the New York University Medical Center, building an addition to the gymnasium at the

Columbus East High School in Columbus, Indiana, and designing a new day-care center at LIU's Brooklyn campus.

**Community Effort**

The Manhattan Comprehensive Night and Day High School has educated generations of needy students, but has rarely attracted the Page Six crowd — until March 14 when Brooke Astor, *Town and Country* editor Pamela Fiori, and people from the Hayden Foundation, New York University, Chemical Bank, and the Mayor's office showed up for the rededication of the historic library.

**Thanhauser & Esterson Architects**

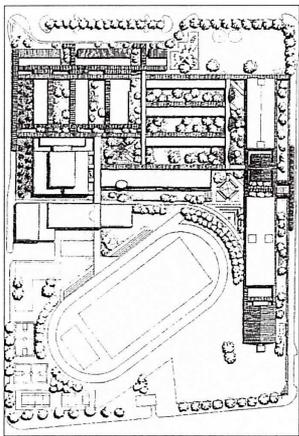
doubled the shelf space in the dignified, high-ceilinged, first-floor library by building a second set of bookcases on top of the original ones, adding old-fashioned library ladders, and creating individual carrels for the new computer center — without changing the character of the space. The firm deserves all the applause it and the many benefactors received.

**The Private Sector**

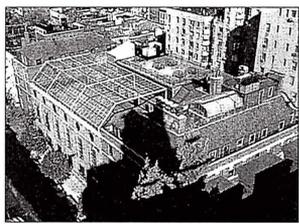
Several area private schools have recently retained **Butler Rogers Baskett** to expand and renovate existing buildings. For the Chapin School, the firm is designing a 20,000-square-foot addition to accommodate a four-story library, new gymnasium, and experimental theater. For St. Bernard's School, it is designing a four-story addition to the school's roof, which will house two kindergarten classrooms, geography and science laboratories, a gymnasium, a theater, and a rooftop play deck. Other BRB school projects include the Buckley and Episcopal schools in New York, and in Connecticut the Canterbury and New Canaan schools.



*Chanel, Inc., facilities expansion project, Platt Byard Dovell Architects*



*Proposed site improvements, U.S. naval station, Rota, Spain, Mitchell/Giurgola Architects*



*Chapin School, Butler Rogers Baskett*

Addison Thompson

**Three Firms from One**

After 25 years of successful collaboration, the partners of Prentice & Chan, Ohlhausen have decided to go separate ways. **Lo-Yi Chan**, FAIA, will concentrate primarily on campus planning. He is working on new master plans for Dartmouth College, Phillips Andover Academy, the Lawrenceville School, Blair Academy, and the Beginning with Children School, a public-private collaboration in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. At the opposite end of the practice scale, he is also reuniting with his original partner, **Tim Prentice**, who left architectural practice to become a sculptor in Connecticut. The two are designing a study center for the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation.

**Rolf Ohlhausen**, FAIA, and **Mark DuBois**, AIA, are forming a new firm for more broadly-based practice with projects for the New School for Social Research and the New York City Housing Authority. **Francis Wickham**, AIA, is starting a firm of his own at the same location and is working on buildings for the Beginning with Children School and Boston Properties.

**New HUD Appointment**  
 HUD Secretary Henry G. Cisneros appointed **Maxine Griffith**, architect and, most recently, member of the New York City Planning Commission, to be the secretary's representative for New York and New Jersey. She will serve as the overseer of HUD programs in the region.

Griffith, who teaches urban design and planning at New York University and was head of Griffith Planning and Design, said, "I plan on continuing HUD's major role in promoting affordable housing and economic development in both states."

**Fifth Avenue Charrette**

An exhibition entitled "Fifth Avenue in the New Millennium" is on display at the Urban Center at 457 Madison Avenue from May 6 to September 6. The Fifth Avenue Project of the Municipal Art Society sponsored a design brainstorming session with teams from **Swanke Hayden Connell**, **Hank White Associates**, **the Central Park Conservancy**, **Kupiec & Koutsomitis**, and **Ehrenkrantz & Eckstut** to find ways to unify the streetscape from the Harlem River at 143rd Street to the Washington Square arch. On exhibition are proposals for street furniture, streetlights, traffic signals, signage, waste-baskets, paving, and improved traffic patterns, all of which must respect the unique character of each neighborhood.

In a public program on May 21 at 6:00 pm, the designers, public officials, and experts will analyze the proposals. The materials will be assembled in a document to help the city, private donors, and property owners improve Fifth Avenue.

**New Jersey Corridor**

Numerous design projects have recently received awards from civic and government agencies. The **U.S. Department of Transportation** and the National Endowment for the Arts gave an honor award to **Wallace Roberts & Todd**, a Philadelphia-based architectural, landscape, and urban design firm, for the New Jersey Transit Corporation's (NJT) *Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Transit System Urban Design Guidelines Handbook*. NJT, **Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas**, and **El Taller Colaborativo, P.C.**, shared the award.

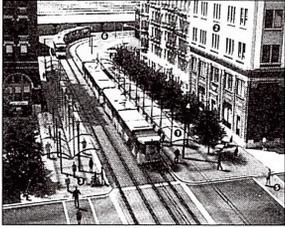
The handbook includes system-wide and site-specific evaluations and recommendations with design solutions —

for stations, platforms, canopies, streetscapes, pedestrian access, and paving — that will serve as a quality-control device for NJT. It supplements the preliminary engineering documentation used as the basis for turnkey procurement for the project's ten-mile, \$800 million first phase. The project's total length will be 20.5 miles. The turnkey process is expected to reduce the project's completion time from 20 years to five. The handbook has already helped NJT secure a \$5 million public art program and create a visual identity for the project. It also guided the design of the recently completed Exchange Place Intermodal Transit Hub in Jersey City.

**Denise Scott Brown**, of **Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates**, chaired the jury. Frederico Pena, Secretary of Transportation, and Jane Alexander, chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, presented the awards on February 29.

**Preservation Awards**

The **New York Landmarks Conservancy** presented its seventh Lucy G. Moses Preservation Awards on March 13. The projects honored include: the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation, for the adaptive reuse of La Casina, a 1930s Art Moderne nightclub, as a local business resource center; 138–142 Prince Street, two historic cast-iron warehouses converted into an artists' cooperative and ground-floor retail by **Li/Saltzman Architects**; Grace Church, Brooklyn Heights, restored by **Page Ayres Cowley**, architect; the lobby of 570 Lexington Avenue in the former G.E. Building, restored by the Mendik Realty Company; the John Tishman auditorium and the Orozco Room at the New School for Social



*Hoboken terminal station design, concept, and guidelines, Wallace Roberts & Todd*



*New Jersey Transit Hudson-Bergen light-rail transit system*

Research, designed in 1931 by Josef Urban and restored by **Prentice & Chan, Ohlhausen, Architects**; the old 83rd precinct police station in Bushwick, Brooklyn, designed in 1894 and restored by **Ehrenkrantz & Eckstut** for the GSA; the SGI-USA New York Cultural Center at 7 East 15th Street, designed in 1885 as a YMCA and restored by **Anita Barholin Brandt** for a Buddhist organization; and the Governors Island maintenance plan by **John Milner Associates** for the U.S. Coast Guard.

In addition, **Elizabeth Barlow Rogers** received the Lucy Moses Leadership Award for dedicating 20 years to revitalizing Central Park.

**Publication Grants**

In its first year, **Furthermore**, a publication project of the J. M. Kaplan Fund, announced grants of \$467,000. Awards averaging \$10,000 each were given to 46 publication and research projects for topics on the built and natural environment, and architecture and design, sponsored by not-for-profit organizations. Grants were given to organizations such as Friends of Cast Iron Architecture, for research on the architect James Bogardus; the Fund for the Borough of Brooklyn, for its exhibition catalog on contemporary architecture in Brooklyn; DGS, for the book *Architecture of Literacy*, on the Carnegie libraries; the Bard Graduate Center, for a publication on the work of Josef Frank; and the Cooper-Hewitt for the catalog, *Henry Dreyfuss: Directing Design*.

The program is directed by Joan K. Davidson, past commissioner of New York State Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. Furthermore now invites applications for 1996. For information, call 518-828-8900.

**Housing Versus Manufacturing: New York's Zoning Dilemma**

by *Suzanne Wertz*

**A**t an event on March 12 sponsored by the New York City Bar Association, called "One-third of New York City Off-Limits to Housing: Why?," real-estate and zoning experts discussed the city's 35-year-old zoning policy, which prohibits new housing or residential loft conversion in manufacturing districts. John E. Zuccotti, CEO of Olympia & York, and Stephen Spinola, president of the Real Estate Board of New York, argued that the city's economic growth potential is now based in business, finance, professional service, retail, creative and performing arts, science and medicine, and tourism. Manufacturing has been steadily declining. Both said that the city's protection of manufacturing uses through zoning laws and subsidies has not worked, because such policies don't reflect economic reality, stymie housing construction, and negatively affect the service sector.

However, Robert B. Fitch, author of *The Assassination of New York*, disagreed. The city, he said, has not done enough to help the manufacturer, although it has continued to provide generous subsidies for commercial development. He contended that slowly strangling manufacturing without a strong industrialization policy is the wrong approach.

The participants agreed that too little housing is being built — New York City is experiencing a housing crisis. And there was a general consensus that subsidies are needed for lower-end housing.

Sandy Hornick, deputy executive director of the Department of City Planning,

reminded the audience that only 14 percent of the city's land (or one-third, when parks are included) is zoned for manufacturing and is therefore "off-limits to housing."

A major premise of the 1961 Zoning Resolution (the last major zoning overhaul) was the nuisance factor that resulted from mixing uses. Zuccotti and Fitch both proposed mixed-use neighborhoods as a solution to the problem. Hornick, however, reported that when mixed uses have been allowed in recent years, residents have complained about the trucking, noise, and vibrations from the manufacturing facilities in their areas. The combination of residential and industrial uses raises other important issues, as well, such as environmental contamination and pollution hazards.

Creating mixed-use districts tends to be politically complicated. Because no manufacturing areas are vacant (except in Staten Island), existing manufacturers are grandfathered in, and consensus is difficult to achieve. Rezoning an area as a mixed-use district, as was done at Mill Basin, Sixth Avenue in Manhattan, Hunters Point, and Red Hook, is a struggle and can be very time-consuming.

The answer to the somewhat misleading question posed by the panel is that there is no easy solution. More work will have to be done. Until then, public discussion can help professionals and community members understand how to meet the challenges in the city's neighborhoods, as the housing shortage continues, manufacturing remains stagnant, and attempts at creating mixed-use districts remain few and rather messy.

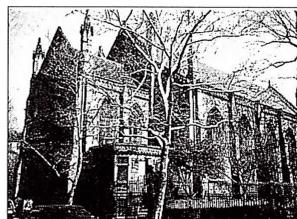
*Suzanne Wertz, AIA, a partner in Grunig & Wertz, is a member of the AIA New York Chapter Housing Committee.*



138-142 Prince Street, before construction, restoration by Li/Saltzman Architects



138-142 Prince Street, after construction, restoration by Li/Saltzman Architects



Grace Church, restoration by Page Ayres Cowley, architect



83rd police precinct station, restoration by Ehrenkrantz & Eckstut

Li/Saltzman Architects

Li/Saltzman Architects

## IN THE STREETSCAPE

### The Casa and the Convent

by Jayne Merkel

Conventional wisdom suggests that a house turned into a school will change in appearance, while a study center merely brought up-to-date will still look the same. But as two important renovations of Renaissance Revival palazzos by **Buttrick, White & Burtis** show, cultural differences can throw conventional wisdom out of whack.

The Otto Kahn and James A. Burden mansions still look pretty much the way they did when they were built in 1918 and 1905, even though the Convent of the Sacred Heart has been holding classes in them since 1940, whereas the Casa Italiana's restored historic teatro and library are now surrounded by diaphanous veils of colored light, minimalist forms, and zesty modern furniture. That's because the Kahn and Burden mansions were always quintessentially American, despite their European inspiration, and they continue to be occupied by Americans with similar cultural aspirations. The Kahn residence on Fifth Avenue and East 91st Street was designed by J. Armstrong Stenhouse with Cass Gilbert to resemble an Italian Renaissance palazzo; the Burden mansion at 7 East 91st Street, by Warren & Wetmore, approximates a French Renaissance hôtel.

The Casa, however, built and operated by Italians who have a less deferential view of history — or, rather, one that assumes continuity with change — has become a showcase of modern design and an example of a different approach to preservation. Italo Roto of Milan and Paris collaborated on the renovation of the center for the

study of Italian culture designed by Buttrick, White & Burtis's predecessor firm, McKim, Mead & White, in 1926. "If we had done it without Italo, it would not have been as wonderful. And if Italo had done it without us, it would not have happened," Samuel White said.

If it still looks much like a palazzo on the outside, it is only because this is New York, not Milan, and the Landmarks Commission would not allow the architects to suggest on the facade that the twenty-first century was about to arrive. The only hint of change on Amsterdam Avenue, besides the bulky modern law school next door, is the golden glow visible in the loggia, where modern Murano colored-glass light fixtures reflect on the recently gilded ceiling.

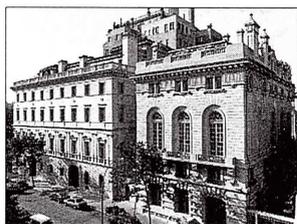
Although the Casa has a rusticated base, arched and pedimented windows, and a projecting classical cornice like the mansions, and at 28,000 square feet may be smaller than either of them, it has a more institutional feel because of its height (six stories rather than four) and context, on the Columbia University campus between 116th and 118th streets. It lacks a porte cochere, and the central entrance is right on the street. The wide, narthex-like entrance gallery has been subdivided, however, and visitors are directed into a reception area on the left, where they approach what Sam White calls "the grandest fire stair in the world." Planar walls of white marble, with the words "Pensare Insieme" (Let's Think Together) sandblasted into relief and painted in metallic rose, lavender, and silver, are bathed in colored light that passes through pastel-glass panels and is reflected from colored-glass sconces off

gilded niches. This modern and hard-edged, if ethereal, staircase leads to the traditional teatro and library on the second and third floors, and then becomes more earthbound on the upper stories, where people tend to take the elevator to the scholars' offices and seminar rooms.

Because White solved the Chinese puzzle necessary to invisibly insert enormous air-conditioning ducts and handicapped access, the wood-paneled teatro with its elegant coffered ceiling is probably more beautiful today than it was when it opened. Now a full row of arched doors leads out to a terrace on the east, making the space more symmetrical and light-filled. When it was built, an adjacent town house prevented some of the arched windows on the facade from being repeated on the opposite side.

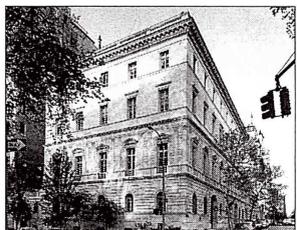
The wood paneled library above it, refitted with lush leather chairs, still has the atmosphere of a fine old club. But at the heart of the center, where scholars work every day, the mood is lighthearted and the interiors are bright and modern. Glass walls of slightly different colors distinguish one office from the next and filter the light entering the central corridors with subtle colors. Offices are opened to clerestory light and each other, from one level to another. The crowning glory is the little loggia on the top, where a long table for group discussions or special events under the gilded ceiling looks out through another sequence of arched windows onto the domes of the Columbia campus to the west, which were inspired by the Italian culture being treated as a living legacy here.

That culture, along with the French one it inspired, is

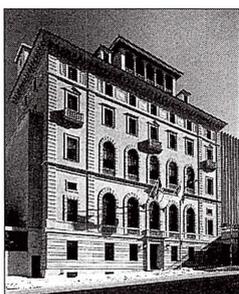


photos: Edward Huebner

Otto Kahn and James Burden mansions, Convent of the Sacred Heart, 1 and 7 East 91st Street



Otto Kahn mansion from Fifth Avenue



Casa Italiana, Amsterdam Avenue between 116th and 118th streets

## IN CONFERENCE

embodied in the architectural heritage of the Convent of the Sacred Heart, where Buttrick, White & Burtis have been working on alterations and restorations for 15 years. Here the job has been to build laboratories, a gymnasium, and classrooms in the two spectacular houses while preserving the atmosphere of domesticity and grandeur, which has both aesthetic and economic value. The school earns \$250,000 to \$300,000 a year renting out the Burden mansion ballroom every weekend and, in warm weather, the Kahn palazzo's magnificent elevated courtyard, which looks like a set for *Three Gentlemen of Verona*. That money went a long way toward paying for the \$1.5 million renovation. And the historic houses give the school a uniqueness and elegance that money cannot easily buy.

### Sidewalk Sale: Advertising in Public Places

by Rosemary Wakeman

The city's plan to redesign street furniture and pay for new public fixtures with advertising provoked lively debate at a panel discussion sponsored by the Municipal Art Society on February 29. Novelist and urban critic Phillip Lopate moderated, as Deputy Mayor Fran Reiter, advertising executive Allen Kay, City Council member Ronnie Eldridge, and Media Incorporated's Ron Corvino debated the proposed program, which was initiated by the Mayor's office.

Deputy Mayor Reiter said it was insulting for New York streets to be cluttered with antiquated bus shelters, newsstands, and news boxes when excellent alternatives were available in many other cities. She explained that the city expects to contract one company to design, coordinate,

and maintain new street fixtures in the five boroughs, and described the program as a breakthrough for providing amenities with the funding adjustments required by downsized public budgets and privatization. But instead of attracting accolades, her comments sparked debate on what should be on the streets of New York, how refurbishment should be financed, and the role of advertising in the city's streetscape.

Corvino, managing director of Media Incorporated, said the difficulty with advertising is that it is often experienced as an eyesore in public space. He mentioned the underlying fear that the city will "sell its virtue" to advertisers to pay for aesthetics. The panelists wondered if there were sacred spaces in the city where advertising should be banned, such as on Fifth Avenue, in parks, or near schools. After all, governments once prohibited advertising in the public domain. Billboards were banned on the interstate highway system. Now advertising, like gambling, has become a means of government funding.

Eldridge added, "The political pattern of advertising is troubling." It could be race- and culture-specific in the most negative sense of the words. The panelists cautioned that a watchful balance needed to be achieved to allow for the spontaneous and idiosyncratic personality of New York's street scene and still create a public realm planned with local community participation.

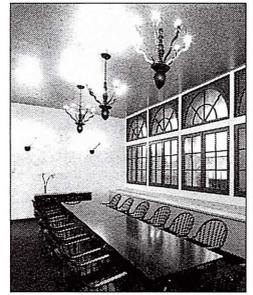
Kay, of Korey, Kay & Partners, explained, "It is paramount that advertising has to be right for the place rather than a haphazard set of choices." It then becomes attractive, fun to look at, and merges into the scene. He mentioned

neon advertising on Times Square as an example of site-specific commercial publicity deeply associated with place.

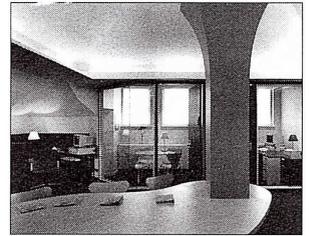
The audience remained largely unconvinced that the city's program would work on behalf of public services, although Reiter argued that advertising was the critical revenue stream that would pay for good design. There was general concern that advertising in public space marked the gradual erosion of civic values. Aren't public services more than toilets, bus stops, and phone booths?

Reiter said, "Every single day the public phones my office and demands public toilets," and advertising is the most felicitous way to pay for them. Kay added that advertising can serve the public good when it informs and provides social awareness. He cited as examples, "SubTalk," the "Members Only" anti-drug advertising campaign, and "Comedy Central," which engages the community with humor and whimsy. The discussion hit on the fundamental questions raised by the street furnishing program: What constitutes the public realm, what are the real and complete amenities and services of the public, and who should pay for them?

*Rosemary Wakeman is an historian whose book on modernization and urban planning in Toulouse, France, is forthcoming from Harvard University Press.*



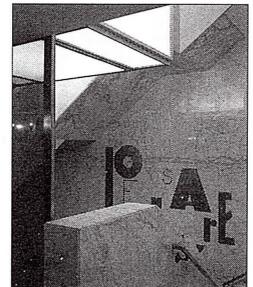
Casa Italiana,  
loggia meeting room



Casa Italiana,  
work area on upper level



Casa Italiana,  
teatro



Casa Italiana staircase



Shan Ries

# CIVICS QUESTIONS

by Todd W. Bressi

**C**ivics Lessons,” the AIA New York Chapter exhibition of recent public architecture in New York City, starts out as a show of stature. It’s a handsome exhibition, deployed with remarkable assurance in the rotunda of the recently restored Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House. And it comes at a pivotal moment, timed to celebrate a busy decade of public design and to build public support for the many projects still on the drawing boards.

The pleasures of “Civics Lessons” are many. The exhibition rightfully argues for an expansive view of public architecture, considering the gamut from park restrooms to airport terminals, special-needs housing to courthouses, and renovation projects to contemporary designs. It underscores the idea that architectural accomplishment can be found in the process as much as the product, describing the painstaking restoration of City College’s Shepard Hall while it was fully occupied, and the patient, persistent design and advocacy work that has been necessary to remake the urban renewal plan for Melrose Commons in the Bronx. And it casts a playful eye at details that enrich civic architecture — the gargoyles on Shepard Hall, the sculpture atop the new 107th precinct house in Queens, the Adirondack-style fencing along the pedestrian islands at LaGuardia Airport.

Placing “Civics Lessons” in the Custom House rotunda was a masterful decision. Just strolling down Broadway (watch how the Custom House, designed by Cass Gilbert in 1907, rounds into view), across Bowling Green, up the grand staircase, and into the great, oval rotunda is a dignified civic experience. The exhibition, designed by

Architecture Research Office, defers to the space yet enriches it. There are few better examples of how public architecture ought to fit into the city, or how it ought to make citizens feel.

Beyond these fundamentals, however, “Civics Lessons” unravels. Its closing comment asserts: “The lessons that emerge from the fine palette of public architectural projects in ‘Civics Lessons’ are compelling.” But the exhibition does not always explain why the projects chosen for display are relevant, and it is not always evident that their architecture is compelling.

The 75 projects on view could have used one more round of paring. And some of the texts that describe the projects, which were written by the architects themselves, amount to little more than civic hype, laced with the kind of breathless prose that is mocked when it tumbles from the mouths of public officials. Must it really be said that Pier A presents “a unique opportunity to enhance the city’s tourism industry by establishing this site as the central hub for visitors” to Lower Manhattan? Other texts miss the point entirely: “P.S. 23 [Bronx] represents an example of how to design a school which maximizes contextuality and site amenity with optimum use of protoparts.”

Moreover, the discussion of the projects tends to shy from the rough edges of civic design, the controversies, conflicts, and trade-offs that underlie almost any public project. For example, the plan for revitalizing Grand Central Terminal calls for ringing the balconies and filling the lower concourse with food concessions. These activities will help pay for needed improvements, but there is fear that they will diminish Grand Central’s stature, rather than “enhance

the terminal’s value,” as the exhibition claims. Consider the inexplicably admiring comments about value engineering that accompany the description of Richard Dattner’s otherwise impressive Queensboro subway station renovation. This process, which can so easily undermine an architect’s work, is treated much more reasonably and instructively in Dattner’s *Civic Architecture*.

Ultimately, these issues reflect on the believability of architects, which is related to the stature architecture is accorded by the public. Too often, the project descriptions suggest that architects walk hand-in-hand with the boosters whose plans communities instinctively distrust, or that architects are so focused on an internal discourse that they are alienated from the people public architecture serves. This undermines the exhibition’s central purpose, which is to “emphasize the fundamental and essential link between public architecture and the economic, social, and aesthetic quality of New York City,” and to argue that New York needs the political will to keep investing in public architecture to remain a world-class city.

On the other hand, “Civics Lessons” does not always give architects enough credit. The practice of designing public architecture is not for the faint of heart. Consider the incessant budget gutting that besets public projects, or the abrupt swings in political winds that can leave them twisting in an off-again, on-again limbo for years. Then there are extended community review processes, calculated to pile on demands and produce least-common-denominator results. These are not ingredients for great architecture, which means that some of the accomplishments on view are all the more remarkable.

The most provocative ques-

tion "Civics Lessons" raises is what it means for architecture to be civic. A century ago, when architects and planners sought to create a sense of order in a chaotic city, expressions of stability like the Custom House made sense.

"Civics Lessons" poses a reasonable contemporary proposition: Public architecture should knit communities together by improving social settings such as schools and parks; it should enhance connections among neighborhoods, and between New York and the rest of the world; it should conserve landmarks; and it should create legible symbols that define the city.

But judging from the projects on view, these propositions have been worked out better at an urban design scale than at an architectural scale. Many of the projects speak in a contextual, postmodern voice, as if architecture is in a holding pattern. Others speak in a modern or deconstructivist language that seems more clearly an expression of architectural fashion than a civic statement.

The quandary for civic architecture is to find modes of expression suitable to our ambitions for a civil, just, compassionate, and equitable society, and to insert them into a city that clings dearly to its established context and symbols. If anything, "Civics Lessons" reveals that New York architects should do more than urge elected officials to keep the pipeline of projects flowing. They must help the city find better ways to conceive of and execute projects, so that more fitting and enriching architectural vocabularies can percolate to the civic landscape. And they must stimulate a more inclusive, critical dialogue that explores what architecture can do better to shape New York's civic realm.

**Contrapuntal Voices:**

**Baratloo-Balch**

by Ellen Kirschner Popper

**T**o Mojdeh Baratloo and Clifton Balch, architecture is a province not just of making, but also of cultural critique and commentary. As part of the "Emerging Voices" series at the Architectural League on March 14, the architects showed a continuum of work ranging from highly theoretical urban-scale exercises to extremely practical product-display systems.

Seated at opposite ends of a long table with slides projected behind them, the soft-spoken pair described their eloquent and understated work. The attentive audience, assailed with vertiginous video images, was sucked into a dizzying tour of a virtual city.

The computer model that ran continuously during the lecture was part of the architects' "City Speculations" installation at the Queens Museum of Art, where designers were asked to create a response to the 10,000-square-foot panorama of New York City commissioned by Robert Moses for the 1964 World's Fair (*Oculus*, February 1996, pp.11-12).

While accurate in scale, the panorama lacked descriptive elements, according to Baratloo and Balch. "It makes the city look like a pleasing pastoral landscape," said Baratloo, "but New York is not pastoral or relaxed. It involves issues of density, insecurity, and speed."

Although not meant to disturb or distract, the video unfortunately did. The architects said that even in a brief lecture they wanted to simulate the pressured and intense circumstances they see as the essence of city life and of the practice of architecture in a contentious environment.

The theme of experience, engendered by and encapsulated in form, permeates their

work. Whether they are revealing chaos beneath a superficial order, as in their computer-animated response to Moses's classic representation of New York, or bringing order out of disarray, as in their intricate, interlocking product-display systems, their work is animated by the juxtaposition of pragmatic problem-solving and an ironic point of view.

A particularly compelling project was the exhibition "Monumental Propaganda" at the World Financial Center in 1993, which was conceived of by Russian-American artists Komar and Melamid just after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The artists issued a call for proposals in *Artforum*, asking designers how to use the many monuments to Totalitarianism that were now obsolete. Baratloo and Balch designed an exhibition system that could be used both to display and transport a show that consisted mostly of fragmentary sketches and ideas. In a wry gesture, modest display cases rest atop plaster busts of Stalin turned on their heads.

The concept of display has intrigued the partners since they were students at the University of Michigan. The component system they designed for Joop! Jeans was shown at the Parsons School of Design gallery in April. They are at work on a book that will address issues such as what happens to the viewer and to the object shown in an exhibition format.

"Our interests are diverse," said Balch. "We have always pursued ideas that are out of the normal scope of a typical architectural practice."

"[Designing] an object does not require a different process, whether it is big or small," added Baratloo. "We are interested in all aspects of architecture and design as they relate to humans."



Mojdeh Baratloo and Clifton Balch

**Mojdeh Baratloo, R.A.**

**Education**

University of Michigan, B.S. Arch., 1976  
University of Copenhagen, 1977  
University of Michigan, M.Arch., 1978

**Experience**

Gunnar Birkerts and Associates, 1978  
Eli Attia and Associates, 1979-81  
Tod Williams, Billie Tsien and Associates, 1982-83  
Baratloo-Balch, 1984-present

**Teaching**

New York Institute of Technology, 1984-87  
Cornell University, 1989, 1991  
Parsons School of Design, 1990, 1994-present  
Harvard Graduate School of Design, 1990  
University of Michigan, 1991-92  
Columbia University, 1991

**Clifton Balch, R.A.**

**Education**

University of Illinois, B.S. Arch., 1975  
University of Michigan, M.Arch, 1977

**Experience**

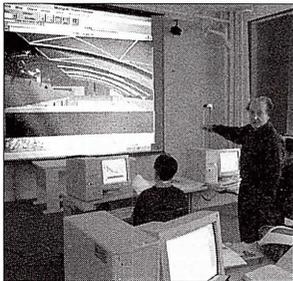
Gunnar Birkerts and Associates, 1977-78  
Mitchell/Giurgola Architects, 1980-87  
Baratloo-Balch, 1984-present

**Teaching**

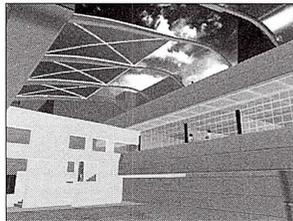
Cornell University, 1989, 1991  
Parsons School of Design, 1990, 1994-present  
Harvard Graduate School of Design, 1990  
Rhode Island School of Design, 1993  
Columbia University, 1994  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 1994



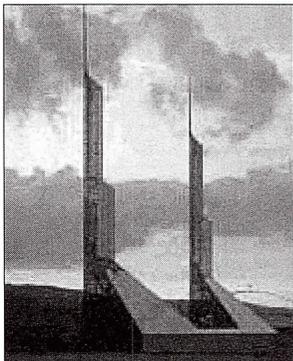
"Monumental Propaganda" exhibition design



"Electronic Design Studio,"  
Pratt school of architecture



Multipurpose facility  
conceptualized by a student  
for the north side of Union Square



An image on the Internet  
Zimmer Gunsul Frasca



A sample Intranet page,  
Zimmer Gunsul Frasca

**Computers in Practice**

by Jerry Albert Laiserin

In 1963, when MIT researcher Ivan Sutherland invented interactive computer graphics, spawning Computer-Aided Design (CAD), the AIA recognized its potential, and chapters began organizing symposia such as the AIA New York Chapter's "Computers in Architecture" panel at Pratt Institute in 1966. On the thirtieth anniversary of that event, on March 11, Pratt's school of architecture held another, "Information Technology and the Architectural Practice," with computer cognoscenti from Zimmer Gunsul Frasca, Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer, Gwathmey Siegel, Kohn Pedersen Fox, and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.

Several threads ran through the presentations. First, information technology (IT) is no longer optional. It is integral to the way architects work. Ken Sanders, AIA, associate partner and manager of information services at Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership (ZGF) in Portland, Oregon, described how "putting a computer on every desk has transformed the internal organization of project teams and even the work process itself." Sanders, author of the recent best-seller, *The Digital Architect*, said, "Today's clients expect all project documentation and communications to be digital." The digitally dexterous architect has expanded employment opportunities, Sanders explained, showing the extensive CAD-database management services ZGF provides for worldwide facilities of clients such as Microsoft.

The second theme running through the presentations was that while IT in design practice has become nearly universal, it

can be used in a variety of ways, as the very different computing styles of Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Architects and Gwathmey Siegel & Associates show. Both firms were founded in the mid-1960s, before IT was practical or affordable. Over the years, each has adapted technology to the design methods of its principals. Elizabeth Skowronek showed how Gwathmey Siegel uses highly-rendered computer simulations and animations (with Adobe PhotoShop and AutoDesk 3D Studio) in international design competitions. The firm's partners strongly believe that successful design requires an active dialogue with an informed client. "Realistic simulations of the final result are an important tool in communicating design intent to the client," she said.

HHPA, on the other hand, uses a mix of computer tools to emulate the principals' long-standing reliance on quick, funky study models, according to James Brogan, AIA, the systems manager at HHPA. Although the firm uses the market-leading AutoCAD for construction documents, Brogan said that it chose MiniCAD to capture the collage-like and almost painterly qualities of the color-coded master plan studies and models that define the firm's work.

A third idea presenters agreed upon was the importance of keeping computer tools in the hands of architects, rather than CAD operators or computer programmers. While architects no longer need to become programmers, many of the pioneering successes in the field have been achieved by architects, especially at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Yangwei Yee, AIA, an associate partner in SOM's New York office, showed how design and soft-

ware evolved together over the last 30 years. Sometimes, new architectural requirements led to new software solutions. SOM's internally-developed A&ES software (now marketed by IBM) is a testament to that process.

A final theme was that IT has become a new international language of architecture. Tomas Hernandez, Jr., an associate partner and director of computer services at Kohn Pedersen Fox Architects and Planners, used examples from his firm's extensive European and Pacific Rim design portfolio (done in Bentley MicroStation software) to demonstrate the competitive advantages of computer-mediated collaboration among widely dispersed consultants and clients. "Each of KPF's founding partners had a unique concentration — on marketing, design, or management," said Hernandez. "The computer allows us to bring our best talents to bear on any project anywhere in the world."

Hans-Christian Lischewski, interim chair of Pratt's undergraduate program, said he planned this symposium to show that "computer education for architects is not about learning specific programs, but involves adapting and revising the process of project delivery using technological tools." Pratt recently received a \$1.2 million Federal Title III grant for an electronic design studio. Lischewski emphasized the importance of helping today's students — harness technology to the work process, rather than allowing computers to control the work product.

*Design management consultant Jerry Albert Laiserin, AIA, who chairs the National AIA's Advisory Group on Computer-Aided Practice, organized and moderated the symposium that is the subject of this report.*

**The Future Is Now  
at Ellerbe Becket**

by Jayne Merkel

**P**eter Pran's architecture used to look futuristic. But now that its curving planes and shifting perspectives are designed not just with thin sheets of gently bent Styrofoam, but with advanced computer technology, the imagery belongs to the present.

Using sequences of three-dimensional computer drawings, Ellerbe Becket architects make videotapes that let them experience spaces as they are designing them, so adjustments can be made before everything is carved in stone — or set in concrete. The videotapes also allow clients to see what they are getting before it is too late to make changes.

"When you finish a building and actually walk through it, you think, I've been here before," said Timothy Johnson of the New York office.

Without leaving their offices, Peter Pran, Dave Rova, and Jonathan Ward visually walked through the complicated Karet Tower, a 600,000-square-foot, 36-story office building in downtown Jakarta, with their clients from P.T. Duta Anggade Realty. "We spent a lot of time in discussion about the curtain wall, the mullion system, the concrete foundation walls, and the metal structure for the curved top," Ward explained.

The architects make the videos at their Minneapolis office by putting together sequences of computer drawings frame-by-frame (the way animators make cartoons), then editing them, and sometimes even creating the music.

Presentation videos are only one of the products of the firm's computer expertise, however. For a transportation control center in New York City designed by Timothy Johnson of the New York office, the firm used the computer drawings from schematic design through construction documentation. "We brought on a new project architect when we started the construction drawings, and it didn't matter because we gave him a series of three-dimensional perspectives already rendered with materials, textures, reflections, colors. It was all there," Ward said.

At the \$85 million New York Psychiatric Center, currently under construction on Riverside Drive, they built a detailed model showing all the pieces in the triangulated, tilted, six-story atrium and examined every detail, every angle, so that the structural engineer and the fabricators could see exactly what they intended. Then, as shop drawings came in, they could verify them against the model.

A similar approach helped Paul Davis of the Minneapolis office describe the precast concrete components of the Diagnostic Tower in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, which had a lot of curves and cuts that would have been difficult to build without the A&ES modeling technology developed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.

Ellerbe Becket uses the flexible and powerful Architectural Engineering Systems program for design, but converts the program to AutoCAD for production, even though a more sophisticated A&ES program is available, because more of the structural engineers and contractors the firm works with use it. The fact that it is the international industry stan-

dard is especially helpful on projects such as the Korean Trade Center, which Ellerbe Becket is designing in Moscow.

They use still another program for presentation renderings and animation — Autodesk's 3D Studio, which is the industry standard for movie people. Converting visual information from one program to another sometimes creates problems. So does the fact that most senior designers, and even some relatively young ones, are not computer literate, let alone savvy. The generation gap also has another trap built in: Computer drawings can look more polished than they are.

**Kevin Lippert at Parsons**

by Jayne Merkel

**D**esigning web sites is a lot like book publishing," explained Kevin

Lippert, founder of the Princeton Architectural Press, during his lecture at Parsons School of Design on March 11. "You create the content, mostly text. You put together images, and you coordinate them with text through graphic design. You design and publish pages."

Although he is better known for publishing books than for working with computers, he has run a computer business along with his press from the beginning. "My career has been on an enormous shifting trajectory, if it even had a trajectory. When faced with a choice, I did both," Lippert explained. His career epitomizes the point that the Parsons's spring lecture series was trying to make, which is that architects today are carving out a lot of different niches for themselves.

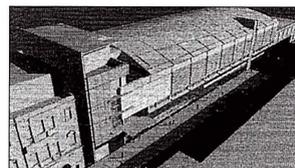
Unable to chose between business, law, medicine, and music



*New York State  
Psychiatric Institute,  
Ellerbe Becket*



*Karet office tower,  
Jakarta, Indonesia,  
Ellerbe Becket*



*Control center,  
confidential location,  
Ellerbe Becket*

after majoring in philosophy at Princeton, he went to architecture school because “architecture seemed the ultimate hedge.” Once enrolled, he was something of an anomaly. He couldn’t draw. “I didn’t have a lifelong desire to be an architect, hadn’t read *The Fountainhead*, didn’t own a fountain pen, and none of my clothes were black,” he said, but “luckily it was 1980. Postmodern historical pastiche was in style. Everyone was rediscovering history, looking at the body, rediscovering the city. All you had to do was find the Renaissance plan that was closest to the problem at hand and plug it in.”

However, a lot of plans were in books that you couldn’t check out of the library or copy on a Xerox machine, so Lippert had Letarouilly’s sought-after *Edifices de Rome* reprinted, managed to sell enough copies to cover his own costs and even make a modest profit — and got sidetracked into publishing instead of design. But he juggles a lot of balls while looking for interesting new (and old) manuscripts. He teaches a course on computing and architecture at Princeton University, manages *Architecture on Line*, an incubating electronic architecture magazine and information center, and runs the continually-evolving small computer business, Design/Systems.

“We no longer do CAD systems for architects in the computer business. Now it’s multimedia programs for CD-ROM, 3D modeling and animation, designing web sites — the kinds of things architectural training ideally prepares you for,” he said, adding that Clement Mok, one of the most successful web site

designers, calls himself an “information architect,” and that Richard Saul Wurman, the author of the popular *Access* travel guides, is an architect who also calls himself an “information architect.”

At this point access to most web sites is free, but Lippert believes that in the future people will be willing to pay for access to sites where there is information that they want or need. For example, he said, a hospital looking for an architect might be willing to pay for access to the portfolios of architects who do health-care work, and architects might be willing to pay for listings.

Any volunteers?

**Catherine Ingraham at Columbia**

by Amy Lamberti

In an evening lecture on March 11 that touched on everything from the color of computers to Desert Storm, architectural theorist Catherine Ingraham pondered the influence of computers on traditional archival evidence and, more generally, on representation within space. Her previous work on theoretical models of bodies and space combined with the widespread use of the computer in both design and theory led to her interest in the subject of her lecture, entitled “Theorizing the Computer in Architectural Design.”

Briefly referring to the sixteenth century and Filippo Brunelleschi’s perspectival means of representation, Ingraham pointed out that the relationship of bodies in space is changed considerably when space actually defines the body, rather than when objects define each other within homogeneous space, as in Brunelleschi’s approach. After visiting Laura Kurgan’s

recent exhibition at the StoreFront for Art and Architecture, which was designed with the Global Positioning System (GPS), most familiar as the system of satellites that guided missiles in the Persian Gulf War, Ingraham said she was struck by the changes that computers have made in recording the evidence of existence. In the exhibition, Kurgan used GPS to draw the location and outline of the StoreFront, mapping it with the satellites and thus redefining it within space. Ingraham asserted that this technique allows space to catch the object.

Current technological advances are dramatically changing the historical record people and cities leave behind, as existing letters and photos are being replaced by digital evidence that is read and stored in a new way. At the same time, the computer is diminishing the role of this physicality in architecture.

Ingraham’s talk itself felt like a trip through cyberspace at times, leaping from link to link, questioning the relationship between object and space in representation. She began to suggest a way to reconcile the freedom of the computer with the reality of buildings, but raised more questions than she answered.



Home page for Design/Systems



WTCA web site

**Constructively Speaking:  
Studies in Tectonic Culture by  
Kenneth Frampton**

Reviewed by Lester Paul Korzilius

**A** professor at  
Columbia  
University,  
Kenneth

Frampton earned the respect of architects with the books *Modern Architecture, A Critical History* (1980), *Modern Architecture 1851–1919* (1981), and *Modern Architecture 1920–1945* (1983), the latter two produced with Yukio Futagawa. Now, in his most theoretical book, *Studies in Tectonic Culture, The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995, 421 pages, 485 illustrations, 8 x 11, \$50.00 cloth), Frampton expounds on ideas presented in outline form in his earlier studies.

Since the late nineteenth century, the concept of space has been an integral part of architectural thinking, and we often cannot help but evaluate architecture in spatial, rather than tectonic, terms. Frampton seeks to redress this imbalance by focusing on the art of construction.

The book begins with a background on the evolution of tectonic form, considering Karl Friedrich Schinkel, Henri Labrouste, Augustus Pugin, Anatole de Baudot, and others. Frampton presents the theories of Viollet-le-Duc and Gottfried Semper, and refers to them throughout the book. Viollet-le-Duc sought to establish architecture as an art of construction based on logic, economy, and craft production. Semper postulated that architecture contains four elements: earthwork, hearth, framework-roof, and an enclosing wall membrane.

The heart of the book devotes one chapter each to the work of six architects: Frank Lloyd Wright, Auguste Perret, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Louis Kahn, Jorn Utzon, and Carlo Scarpa. As in *Modern Architecture, A Critical History*, Frampton uses the work of a particular architect as the basis for a discussion of a particular theme. The inclusion of Utzon and Scarpa adds scope, as neither were mentioned in his 1980 book.

The book is at its best when it combines an analysis of a work's underlying principles with its tectonic manifestations. The chapters on Perret, Utzon, and Scarpa are particularly strong. Frampton points out that the tectonic elements of Perret's work include using an expressed structural skeleton as an ordering principle, emphasizing the joint and separation of materials, and reinterpreting traditional features. He astutely notes that Perret provided inflections in his work to create a hierarchy of building types and elements.

The chapter on Utzon alone is worth the price of the book. Frampton analyzes projects unknown to most architects by structural types and notes Utzon's overriding concern for the expressivity of structure and construction. He perceptively discusses the pavilion-pagoda in the context of the Sydney Opera House, and observes that Sydney proves that a tectonic idea does not always produce rational work

In Scarpa's work, the joint is a tectonic condensation that contains the underlying elements of the entire design. Frampton explains this concept with several examples and discusses underlying themes, such as duality in the Brion-Vega cemetery, and transition and bearing at the Fondazione

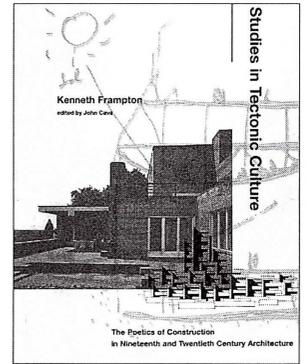
Querini Stampalia.

The chapters on Wright, Mies van der Rohe, and Kahn are valuable for their tectonic view of these architects' work, but less clear in their underlying themes. In the chapter on Wright, Frampton discusses the tectonic application of textured concrete block in Wright's houses of the 1920s and the articulated curtain wall proposed for the National Life Insurance offices. He considers Johnson Wax a tectonic tour-de-force that weaves Semper's four elements into an intricate composition.

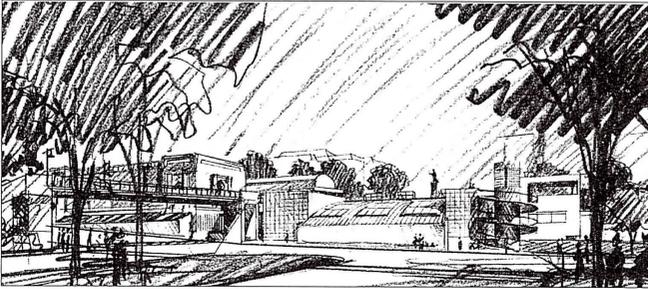
Mies van der Rohe, following the precedent of Schinkel and Berlage, sought a discipline of clear construction to combine a rational order with the poetics of construction. For Mies, structure was a philosophical idea. Frampton gives many examples of this concept, including a well-written section on Mies's brick country houses of the 1920s. Mies has talked of his work in terms of "almost nothing" and the "will of an epoch translated into space," both ambiguous concepts that would have benefited from Frampton's clarification.

For Louis Kahn, a space was architectural when the evidence of how it was made could be seen and comprehended. From the Richards Medical Laboratories onwards, Kahn treated structure as the potential generator of space. In the Kimbell Art Museum, the barrel vault and the earthwork presence are the dominant tectonic elements determining the building's overall character.

This book is a valuable contribution to architectural theory, particularly in light of the current hyper-intellectual trends at many architectural schools.



Steven Holl breaks ground this month on the chapel of St. Ignatius at Seattle University, which won an AIA New York Chapter project honor award in 1995, and Gwathmey Siegel's addition to the Henry Art Gallery at the University of Washington has just started construction, but there is already a lot to see in this pivotal city in the Northwest.



Henry Art Gallery

**Seattle, Through Eastern and Western Eyes**

by Jayne Merkel (New York) and Victoria Reed (Seattle)

**T**he way Seattle spreads across land, sea (Puget Sound), several islands, and lakes creates a hard act for architecture to follow. The foothills of the Cascade Mountains rise steeply, affording views of the water, islands, and Mount Ranier. Though Seattle lies north of Maine, Montreal, and Quebec, warm Pacific Northwest ocean currents keep it temperate year-round, and frequent showers make it green. Natives say it doesn't rain as much here as it does in New York, just more often, but bring an umbrella.

Well-watered timber attracted the first white settlers — old lumber families from the east — to the land of the ancient Salish Coast people in the 1850s. The city grew slowly, to only 3,553 by 1880, and when the first building boom began, a major fire wiped it out in 1889. However, the city got a significant jump start in 1897,

when gold was discovered in Alaska, and Seattle became a major supply point. Because of the fire, new buildings were built of brick, right over the graded remains of the ones they replaced, which are still visible on an underground tour. This rebuilt area, Pioneer Square, was restored in the 1960s and became the city's first historic district in 1970. Its several blocks of muscular brick-and-stone, Romanesque Revival, mixed-use buildings hold more historical than architectural interest. They show what a rough frontier town Seattle still was at the turn-of-the-century. Though these brightly-painted, sturdy structures house apartments and art galleries, the fact that nearby plazas are filled with the homeless, whom the police try to rout, reveals the lack of a significant middle class downtown and the limits of preservation without a strong economic base.

The Pike Place Market on Puget Sound's Elliott Bay waterfront, in business since 1907, has more modest buildings, but the marine vernacular here remains commercially viable. A lively mix of ferry terminals, food shops, fish markets, honky-tonk stores, and quaint storefront architects' offices gives the western edge of downtown a nautical if slightly touristy feel.

Elsewhere, despite its spectacular natural setting and wealth, Seattle's downtown is typical of an American city its size — half a million in the city proper, about two-and-a-half million overall. Although the city has boasted the tallest building west of the Mississippi since 1914, the 48-story terra-cotta Smith Tower, nothing else pierced the Seattle sky until John

Graham and Victor Steinbruck's Space Needle was built for the World's Fair in 1962. The 50-story, rectangular bronze tower by local NBBJ, called the box the Space Needle came in, topped the skyline after 1969. Then the threat of a height restriction created a rush for building permits before the actual legislation was passed in 1989, limiting heights to 450 feet. The sleek, asymmetric Columbia Tower by Chester Lindsey at 76-stories is a notable exception, and is the best place from which to view the city. Yamasaki, a Seattle native, had added a 23-story white marble office building for IBM in 1964, before his remarkable 40-story Ranier Tower, an inverted pedestal, also in white marble, was built in 1978.

Three recent skyscrapers dominate the city's core. Kohn Pedersen Fox's sleek, post-modern, 54-story Washington Mutual Tower of 1988 is the most dignified. Callison Architecture's slightly more modern, 44-story, Pacific First Centre of 1992 presents a series of different facades and has unusually appealing public spaces, shops, and restaurants inside. NBBJ's streamlined, 56-story Two Union Square building of 1993 symbolizes the nautical and aerodynamic character of the city where Boeing airplanes are made. The overlapping grids on its sides echo nearby window patterns and the streets below.

Eclipsed but not forgotten is the flavor of earlier Seattle: Cutter Malmgren & Wager's Jacobean Ranier Club of 1904; Bebb & Gould's miniature flatiron Times Square Building of 1915; George B. Post & Sons' grand Olympic Hotel of 1922; and B. Marcus

Priteca's Coliseum Theater of 1913, which Banana Republic converted to its most successful store in 1995. This central area of downtown is connected to the old World's Fairgrounds at the Westlake Mall by the monorail, still the only evidence of a rapid transit system in the city. But just under the mall, a tourist will find handsome new marble-clad, postmodern subway stations by Parsons Brinkerhoff with TRA. Built to accommodate rapid transit, which voters rejected in the last election, the stations in the over \$400 million metro tunnel now serve the existing city buses, which convert to electric power downtown.

TRA's handsome, Erickson-inspired, concrete-and-glass Seattle Convention Center of 1988 is almost invisible, though it straddles a freeway and connects downtown with the nearby First Hill neighborhood. It disguises its massiveness with a complicated, multilevel plan and melts into Lawrence Halprin's 1976 Freeway Park.

Conversely, Venturi and Scott Brown's Seattle Art Museum dominates the streetscape despite its modest size, curving around a corner with a colorful, decorative arcade lining the sidewalk. Inside, top-heavy polychrome arches hang over the grand staircase, giving the place an intriguing non-Western feeling, but shooting the architects' wad before the actual galleries begin.

Despite the museum's move from Bebb & Gould's impressive art moderne building in Volunteer Park to a downtown location, Seattle's heart is in its neighborhoods, which are varied and divided by the landscape. Capitol Hill, near the original museum, is one

of the oldest and most urbane areas, and is home of the beautifully sited but strangely unfinished Saint Mark Episcopal Cathedral by Bakewell & Brown of 1926-30, the quaint, craftsmanly Cornish College of the Arts by Albertson Wilson Richardson of 1921, and a number of fine private houses, including the R. D. Merrill house by Charles Platt of 1908-09, recently acquired by the builder's grandson and remodeled by Richard Gluckman of New York.

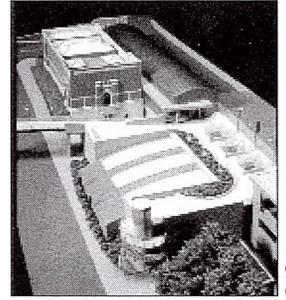
The grandest historic residential enclave is the gated community of the Highlands, on the shores of the Sound just north of the King County line. Closer to downtown, a mile or so east of Capitol Hill, the neighborhoods of Denny Blaine, Madison Park, and Madrona contain fine early twentieth-century houses. Some hug the western shores of 30-mile-long Lake Washington. On the east side of the lake, impressive old lakefront houses, built as summer homes before the floating bridge was constructed in 1964, are being upstaged in size at least by the oversized homes of the new cyber barons. Bill Gates's close to \$30 million house in Medina, by green architect Peter Bohlin of Pittsburgh and Jim Cutler of local Bainbridge Island, has been under construction for several years.

One of the country's finest public campuses, the University of Washington, was built on the grounds of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, laid out by the Olmsted Brothers in 1909. Generous Collegiate Gothic buildings, courtyards, and grand allees begun in the 1920s by Carl Gould set the tone of the big but bucolic

campus. They have been extended and enlivened by TRA, NBBJ, Mitchell/Giurgola, Kallman McKinnell & Wood, Cesar Pelli, Edward Larrabee Barnes, and Moore Ruble Yudell. Barnes's recently completed Allen Library mediates exquisitely between Bebb & Gould's Collegiate Gothic Suzzallo Library of 1926 and a Yamasaki-inspired modern addition of 1959. Gwathmey Siegel's addition (with Loschky Marquardt & Nesholm) to the 1929 Henry Art Gallery, also by Carl Gould, is under construction at the university now. Still, the masterpiece of Seattle architecture is likely to be on another campus across at the south end of Broadway, where a Seattle native, New York architect Steven Holl (in collaboration with Olson/Sundberg), is building a jewel-like new chapel filled with colored light at the Jesuit Seattle University.

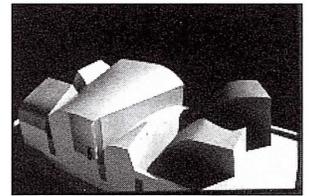
*More information on Seattle is available in Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, ed., Shaping Seattle Architecture, A Historical Guide to the Architects (University of Washington Press, 1995, 446 pages, 529 black-and-white illustrations, 6 x 9, \$40.00 cloth, \$19.95 paper), and other Washington University Press publications.*

*The Access guide series has also done a nice job on Seattle.*

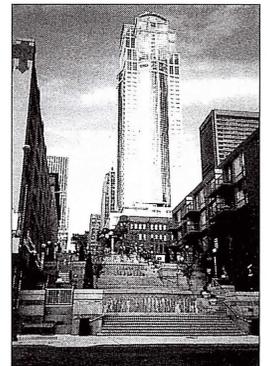


Phil Banko

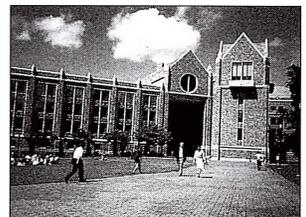
*Henry Art Gallery,  
Gwathmey Siegel*



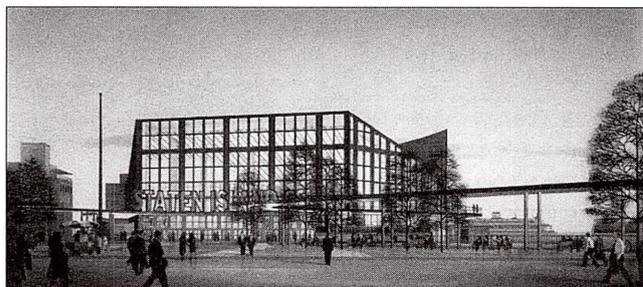
*Chapel of St. Ignatius,  
Steven Holl Architects*



*Washington Mutual Tower with  
fountain near Pike Street market,  
KPF*



*Library addition,  
University of Washington,  
Edward Larrabee Barnes*



Revised proposal for Staten Island ferry terminal, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown

**Venturi at Columbia: One-Stop Shopping on the Information Strip**

by Deborah Fausch

**R**obert Venturi's lecture to a packed house on February 21 was his first appearance in Columbia's lecture halls in 20 years, according to Dean Tschumi. Venturi rectified this lapse with a fairly complete survey of his firm's work, after first revealing his predilection for architectural history with a break-neck review of the past 2,500 years of architecture — beginning with Egyptian hieroglyphics and finishing with his own I.e.d. screens. The information age has been with us all along, it seems.

As the title of his lecture, "Iconography on Architecture," promised, Venturi argued that the most appropriate response to electronic technology is to employ the building as it has often been employed in the past — as a prop for info-decoration. Drawing on material from *Complexity and Contradiction* and *Learning from Las Vegas*, his two seminal books on the architecture of postmodernity

(the second coauthored with Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour), Venturi made a case for his recent projects as the most appropriate response to the "mediatization of post-modern life." The firm's project for Philadelphia's Orchestral Hall, which has pixellated screens running along its length and a musical score as a guardrail, enlarges the idea of the decorated shed to encompass a wider range of media without altering its essential concept. Venturi took issue mostly implicitly with post-structural representations of "the space of the computer" by means of muscularly constructivist imagery. Doubtless it was a shock for Columbia students to hear their school's approach described as nostalgic and some of their faculty labeled an "elderly avant-garde," as Venturi poked fun at examples of architecture with applied modern structural decoration.

Venturi's application of the idea of the decorated shed to the architecture of the information age may seem to be stretching a point, but a glance into the firm's history shows that it has been preoccupied with the design of information and media, broadly defined in terms of "communication channels," since the late 1960s. In addition to the National Football Hall of Fame, a media center for football heroes, the firm also completed a little-known 1967 study for the Educational Facilities Laboratories called "Mini-Structures for Mixed Media," a design for a new town halfway between Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. The project proposed making the entire city a learning environment, with no differentiation between learning and non-learning situations. The town center was designed as a com-

munications strip, with smaller neighborhood centers at various points along the way. Residential areas were left as relatively unadulterated American fabric of single-family houses on rectangular blocks, connected to the center by diagonal avenues. These pods were linked along a six-lane media freeway in a circular pattern, without the center that classical planning theory would have required.

The firm's approach today is to create modest, generic architecture with superimposed layers of information-cum-decoration in both plan and elevation. Venturi's Staten Island ferry terminal proposal is now an organically-planned loft building with an Aaltoesque form that supports an ever-changing information panel facing the water. Commuters will be treated to an information barrage that will be much more abrasive than the clock originally proposed, which was scuttled due to lack of political and financial support.

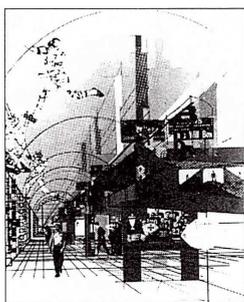
The larger question — whether the appropriate response to the cybernetic world is to create a spatial analog or to treat it as just one more medium — is one that will not be answered until it has already been accomplished. This will not halt the discussion, however, and Venturi's lecture represented one side of the debate with intelligence and erudition.

*Deborah Fausch, an author of Architecture in Fashion and faculty member at Parsons School of Design, is completing a doctoral dissertation on Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown at Princeton.*



John T. Miller

Robert Venturi



Sketch for competition, National Football Hall of Fame, Robert Venturi with Gerod Clark and Frank Kawasaki

**Diane Lewis on Abstraction in Art and Architecture**

by Jayne Merkel

The setting was certainly right. “This is the Pantheon of the twentieth century,” Diane Lewis began, seemingly awed to be speaking in the rotunda of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Guggenheim Museum. She explained that she had been asked to talk about the parallels between abstraction in architecture and in the art upstairs in the exhibition “Abstraction in the Twentieth Century: Total Risk, Freedom, Discipline.”

“We as architects have never had an exhibition of this kind — of abstraction, purely of plans,” she said as she constructed a dense philosophical argument laced with quotations from T. S. Eliot, Edgar Allan Poe, Arthur Rimbaud, Jean Paul Sartre, and Andre Gide, peppered with off-the-cuff, in-your-face statements in very plain English. She made it clear that the connection between abstract art and modern architecture is direct and intense.

Right away, she took exception to curator Mark Rosenthal’s widely accepted contention in the catalog essay that abstract art represents a rupture with the past. “To believe this is somehow a break with the past is the most fallacious notion,” she said. “In architecture, the belief was that for the spiritual content to survive, it was necessary to go back to bare bones.”

She said that what once appeared in art and architecture to be a new relationship between form and content was, in fact, a return to first principles, as the architects always said it was. She showed the similarities between modern architecture and the affirmation of the picture plane,

the use of the right angle, “this constant holding of the orthogonal [that is] important in many of the works in the exhibition, the constant labor to take out any perspective or illusionary elements” from Mondrian to Barnett Newman and beyond. “Architectural space has always been represented two-dimensionally. Architects do not use illusionary drawings to build buildings,” she pointed out.

The emphasis on paint as paint in Abstract Expressionism and in minimalist sculpture (Carl Andre, Richard Serra) is equivalent to Mies’s use of steel I-beams stripped bare to post and lintel. “Wright’s search for a new honesty of structure, a structure so essential it disappears, leads to the free plan,” she said.

“Frank Lloyd Wright was a conceptualist. He said, ‘There is more beauty in the free ground plan itself than perhaps any of its ultimate consequences.’ This from a man who built 500 houses, a Midwestern man of the people,” Lewis noted. “Even Le Corbusier was not quite as theoretical. He said, ‘The plan is the generator.’ That is much less radical.”

Partly as a rhetorical device, Lewis turned her argument into a story with characters. “Postmodernism over the last 20 years — which began when Philip Johnson said, ‘Who ever told you a column had to hold up anything?’ — was a retreat from modernist space and structural breakthrough to virtuosity and Beaux-Arts academicism, and a separation between image and text, body and mind.

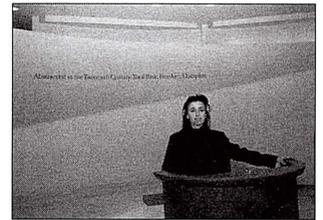
“Here in America, Philip Johnson called Frank Lloyd Wright ‘the great nineteenth-century architect.’ First

Johnson erased the structural innovation and the ethos of the free plan by calling it the International Style. Then he could supplant it with other styles, anti-structuralist styles like postmodernism and deconstruction. It was an American version of Goebbels’s ‘Degenerate Art’ conceit,” Lewis said. The reason architecture has never had an exhibition of abstraction is because that is “not how architecture has been sold here,” she maintained.

“If I were to fill this museum with plans of architecture from throughout the twentieth century,” she mused, “you could reduce all this [her argument] to a set of plans — from the Robie House, to the Brick Wall House, to the Villa Savoye with three types of plans stacked on top of one another, to the 50 by 50 House, to the Wall House. The Five Architects, the American equivalents of the artists upstairs, understood how to transform a city with one or two elements — Richard Meier’s Aye Simon Reading Room at the Guggenheim, so subtle you don’t even know it’s there, Gwathmey’s intervention sewn into the block, Hejduk’s unbelievable transformation of a great institution [Cooper Union].”

The exhibition went up in the audience’s mind’s eye. When she finished, the rotunda was filled with thunderous applause and then silence. There was nothing more to say.

*Diane Lewis is a New York architect who teaches at Cooper Union. The exhibition will be on view through May 12.*



*Diane Lewis at the Guggenheim*

## **"Civics Lessons" Opening on March 14 at the Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House**

first row

left: "Civics Lessons" opening

right: Richard Zuckerman; Linda Yowell, AIA;  
Frances Halsband, FAIA; Mark Wright, AIA



second row

left: Marilyn Jordan Taylor, AIA; Jerry A.  
Davis, FAIA; the Honorable William J.  
Diamond; Carol Clark

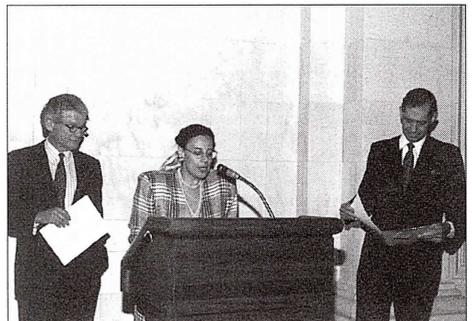
right: Jerry Taylor, FAIA; the Honorable Karen  
Adler; the Honorable William J. Diamond



third row

left: Alexandros Washburn, New York State  
Director to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan;  
Marilyn Jordan Talyor, AIA; John D. T. Gerber,  
AIA

right: James Frankel; Jill Frankel; Jerry Davis,  
FAIA; Cecelia Alers; Mary Overly Davis, AIA

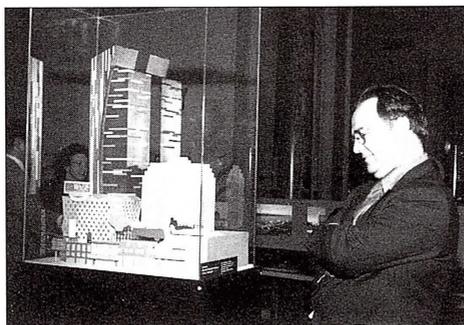


fourth row

left: Edward Mills, AIA (with model of 42nd  
Street hotel)

right: Exhibition designers Elena Moutsopoulos  
and Stephen Cassell of ARO

photos by John Ashworth



## Housing Committee Lends Its Voice to National and International Forums

by Kira Gould

Once again, the AIA New York Chapter Housing Committee is making itself heard. This month at the AIA National Convention in Minneapolis, a resolution drafted by the AIA New York Chapter Housing Committee "to reaffirm a commitment to humane and decent housing for all Americans" will be brought to the floor for consideration. Of more than ten resolutions submitted for this honor, it was the only one chosen, and many city and state chapters around the country have endorsed the proposal. If the resolution is accepted, the national organization will fund a task force to address housing policy issues.

At the international level, the AIA New York Chapter has been trying to find a way to

give architects and the organization a cohesive voice at next month's Habitat II, the United Nations conference on human settlements. Although the National AIA has been accredited as a non-government organization (allowing members some limited participation if they choose to attend the event in Istanbul next month), it chose not to fund a larger presence there, due to the triennial conference of the International Union of Architects in Barcelona just two weeks later.

The relatively low profile of the architectural profession at such a significant event has mobilized the Housing Committee and its newest member, the Chapter's president-elect Robert Geddes, FAIA. Geddes is a member of the team of 25 professionals who have been crafting the U.S. platform paper. The team, which is being directed by Michael Stegman, assistant secretary for policy development

and research at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, includes only two architects. "A generation ago, such a team would have been mostly architects," Geddes said. "Either we've given up or they've given up on us."

The Housing Committee is trying to increase architect participation. A recent meeting included guest Aliye Celik, officer in charge of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, who encouraged architects to attend the conference to learn about housing solutions all over the world, to gain an understanding of the issues, and to engage in forums. "It seems that no one is aware of the urgency," she said. "There are some 2.5 billion people living in cities today; in just 30 years, that number will be 5 billion." Celik stressed that the UN had tried to include all members of the civic realm in the conference.

## DEADLINES

### April 17

Deadline for submissions to the Netherlands Architecture Institute "International Student Ideas Competition" to design a school of architecture for the future. Contact the Netherlands Architecture Institute, "International Student Ideas Competition on Architecture and Education," Museumplein 25, Rotterdam, the Netherlands, 31-010-440-1200.

### May 24

Deadline for submissions to the Glenwood City Hall design competition, with cash prizes up to \$22,500 and a commission to develop the winning design for a new village hall and town square. Contact the Glenwood Competition Village of Glenwood, Attn: Eda Schrimple, 13 South Rebecca Street, Glenwood, IL 60425, 708-758-8038.

### May 24

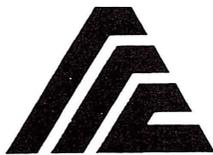
Deadline for submissions to "Altering the Current," an open competition for architecture students sponsored by Cooper Development Association and AIA Students to design a site for the New Orleans Center for Alternatives in Science and Math, a magnet school. Jurors include Moshe Safdie, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and William Bruder. Contact AIAS- "Altering the Current," American Institute of Architects, 1735 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20006, 202-626-7472.

### May 31

Registration deadline for "New York: The Lost Archipelago, Governor's Island," sponsored by the New Jersey Institute of Technology. The competition for proposals on the future of Governor's Island, which has \$25,000 in prizes, is open to architects under 35. Jurors include Charles Gwathmey, FAIA, Karen Van Lengen, AIA, Rafael Vinoly, FAIA, and Bartholomew Voorsanger, FAIA. Contact USA Institute, 10 W. 15th St., Suite 1126, New York, NY 10011-6826, 727-2157.

### July 1

Programs available for the Greenport Waterfront Park design competition, for a four-acre waterfront park on Long Island. Jurors include Nicholas Quennell, James Stewart Polshek, FAIA, and Billie Tsien, AIA. Contact Greenport Waterfront Park Competition, 400 Front St., P.O. Box 463, Greenport, NY 516-477-3000.



## ALLIED COVERAGE

Professional Liability Insurance  
Designed for the Specialized Needs of  
Architects & Engineers

390 North Broadway  
Jericho, New York 11753

Tel. 516-733-9231  
Fax 516-681-7390

For information please contact  
Amy Wollman Wistreich

## You Need It! We Have It!

### Charrette: The Choice of NY's Architects

- Authorized AIA documents distributor.
- Most complete selection in the industry — **in stock!**
- NEW! CAD and plotter equipment and supplies.
- NEW! Everyday discount prices — **up to 70% off!**
- NEW! 1994-1995 Discount Supplies Catalog. Call for your copy.

Call: 212-683-8822  
Fax: 212-683-9890

**charrette**

SOLUTIONS FOR DESIGN PROFESSIONALS  
215 Lexington Avenue, New York City, New York

**May 1, 5:30 pm***Public Architects at  
New York City Transit Authority***May 2, 8:30 am***Professional Practice***May 9, 6:00 pm***Minority Resources***May 13, 6:00 pm***Housing***May 14, 5:30 pm***Computer Application at  
Weidinger & Associates***May 15, 8:30 am***Public Sector Liaison***May 15, 8:30 am***Architecture for Education***May 15, 6:00 pm***Architecture Dialogue***May 16, 6:00 pm***Building Codes***May 16, 6:00 pm***Marketing and Public Relations***May 20, 6:30 pm***Learning By Design:NY***May 23, 5:30 pm***Foreign Visitors***May 28, 6:00 pm***Corporate Architects***May 28, 6:00 pm***Design Awards***May 29, 6:00 pm***Women in Architecture*

Please confirm meeting times and locations by calling AIA New York Chapter headquarters at 683-0023, ext. 17.

"We need to hear from academics, mayors, local authorities, youth groups, and tenants' organizations," she said.

For the committee's part, chair Beth Greenberg said that it is laying the groundwork for a public presentation to review the proceedings and possible impact of Habitat II.

### Remembering David Gebhard

by Adolf K. Placzek

**W**ith David Gebhard, architecture, architectural history, the preservation movement, and indeed the sheer enjoyment of our manmade heritage has lost a most eloquent spokesman, a brilliant recorder and interpreter, and an indefatigable advocate. Gebhard died on March 3 near his home in Santa Barbara, California. He died as he had lived: in full action and cheer, on a Sunday bicycle ride in the landscape he loved. He was 68.

David — I may call him that, for he was a friend — was born in Cannon Falls, Minnesota, on July 21, 1927. He received his Ph.D. in art and architectural history from the University of Minnesota, with a dissertation on Purcell and Elmslie, still a most authoritative document on this important Prairie school firm in the succession of Louis Henry Sullivan and early Frank Lloyd Wright. From 1955 to 1961, he was director of the Roswell Museum and Art Center in Roswell, New Mexico. There he began to organize great exhibitions and to produce exhibition catalogs that have become classics: *Indian Art of the Northern Plains* and *Prehistoric Paintings of the Diablo Region*.

In 1961 David moved to Santa Barbara, where he spent the rest of his wonderfully productive life and where he put down deep roots. He was direc-

tor of the University Art Gallery at Santa Barbara from 1961 to 1981, and established the architectural drawings collection, now a key archive in the field. At the university he became one of the most creative teachers of architectural history, inspiring in his students a loving appreciation of architecture.

He was, as is evident, not only a leading expert on California and Midwestern Prairie school architecture, but was also thoroughly familiar, as well, with Austrian architecture and the Austro-Californian architecture of R. M. Schindler and Richard Neutra. He wrote a fine book on the English architect Charles F. A. Voysey. More than 25 exhibition catalogs bear his imprint, and each is of abiding interest: be it *Moderne* in Southern California (*Moderne* with an "e" was one of his favorite words), on Lloyd Wright,

on R. M. Schindler, or on the Arcadian gardens of California.

And then there are his guidebooks. They are classics in the field: guides to Los Angeles, Southern California, San Francisco, and Northern California, and above all the guide to the architecture of his original home state, Minnesota. For the *Buildings of the United States* series of the Society of Architectural Historians, he produced a volume on Iowa. I was then editor-in-chief of the series, and when I received the manuscript, I was truly astonished: such enthusiasm and originality of approach, such breadth of connections (David even managed to bring the Viennese Secession into Iowa)! At the time of his tragically untimely death, we editors were already hoping to incorporate a revised and updated version of his Minnesota and California guides into the B.U.S. series. The loss of his presence, here too, is incalculable.

David Gebhard was also an ardent preservationist: How could he not have been? He held, in Santa Barbara, many important positions in the defense of the California heritage. From 1980 to 1982, he served with distinction as president of the Society of Architectural Historians, succeeding me in that office.

His was a life of creativity, of joy, of laid-back but unflagging pursuit of his life-enhancing objectives: a heavy task executed with a light hand. I shall miss him. But all lovers of architecture can take affirmation and inspiration from what he did and how he did it.

*Adolf K. Placzek is a former librarian of the Avery Library at Columbia University.*

### Local Law Looks Toward an Earthquake-Proof New York

by Johnathan Sandler

**B**uildings in New York City have always been designed to withstand persistent wind, rain, and snow, but until recently almost no attention has been paid to the seismology of the region. The word earthquake did not appear anywhere in the New York City building codes until February of this year, when a new seismic code known as Local Law 17/95 went into effect. Shortly thereafter, the AIA New York Chapter's Architecture for Education and Building Codes committees cosponsored a panel discussion on the new code, moderated by Carl Puchall, AIA. Participants included Richard C. Visconti, R.A., first deputy commissioner, New York City Department of Buildings; engineers Leo E. Argiris, P.E., of Ove Arup, and Jeffrey Smilow, P.E., of Cantor-Seinuk; and architect Carl Galimoto, AIA, of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.

**Rizzoli Bookstores' Top 10**

*As of March 20, 1996*

1. **Michael Graves**, *Michael Graves* (Rizzoli, paper, \$40.00).
2. **Frederick Fisher Architect**, *Frederick Fisher* (Rizzoli, paper, \$40.00).
3. **Ralph Johnson of Perkins & Will**, *Ralph Johnson* (Rizzoli, paper, \$40.00).
4. **Karl Friedrich Schinkel**, *Barry Bergdoll* (Rizzoli, cloth, \$55.00).
5. **House of the Architect**, *Anatxu Zabalbeascoa* (Rizzoli, cloth, \$50.00).
6. **American Masterworks: The Twentieth-Century House**, *Kenneth Frampton* (Rizzoli, cloth, \$60.00).
7. **Contemporary California Architects**, *Philip Jodidio* (Taschen, paper, \$24.99).
8. **Contemporary European Architects**, *Philip Jodidio* (Taschen, paper, \$24.99).
9. **Venise Aquarelles de Turner**, *Andrew Wilton* (Bibliothèque de L'Image, paper, \$17.50).
10. **Anchoring New Edition**, *Steven Holl* (Princeton Architectural Press, cloth, \$29.95).

**Urban Center Books' Top 10**

*As of March 22, 1996*

1. **S, M, L, XL**, *Rem Koolhaas* (Monacelli Press, cloth, \$75.00).
2. **Studies in Tectonic Culture**, *Kenneth Frampton* (MIT Press, cloth, \$50.00).
3. **Delirious New York**, *Rem Koolhaas* (Monacelli Press, paper, \$35.00).
4. **Raimund Abraham: (UN)Built**, *Raimund Abraham* (Springer Verlag, cloth, \$95.00).
5. **Form Follows Finance: Skyscrapers and Skylines in New York and Chicago**, *Carol Willis* (Princeton Architectural Press, paper, \$22.50).
6. **Mirrors of Infinity: The French Formal Garden and 17th-Century Metaphysics**, *Allen S. Weiss* (Princeton Architectural Press, paper, \$14.95).
7. **The American City**, *Alexander Garvin* (McGraw-Hill, cloth, \$59.95).
8. **Tadao Ando**, *Frances Dal Co* (Phaidon, cloth, \$75.00).
9. **Frank Gehry**, *El Croquis 74/75* (El Croquis, paper, \$73.50).
10. **Light Construction**, *Terrence Riley* (Museum of Modern Art, paper, \$30.00).

“Last Friday the job market got more competitive. Twelve of your friends learned CADD at The CFA/CADD Training Center.™  
Now it's your turn to catch up.”

**Why Consulting for Architects, Inc. for CADD?**

**AIA/CES Pilot Provider:** Our program meets AIA/CES Quality Level 3 criteria. Participants earn 60 LU's (learning units) for each 20-hour course.

**Multiple Softwares Taught:** State licensed courses in Autodesk's AutoCAD®, Intergraph MicroStation PC®, and many others.

**Flexible Schedule:** Morning, afternoon and evening sessions at our classroom facility or at your office by the hour.

**Minimized Down Time:** Learn CADD in one week, intensive 20-hour courses; including construction documentation and design; (basic, intermediate and advanced).

**Small Class Size:** Taught by state licensed A/E/C instructors for design professionals: limit 6 students per class in high-quality learning environment.

**Three Months Free:** Each class includes practice time in our computer lab; Prepare a project for your portfolio.

**Custom Training:** We teach your staff our curriculum, or train them by the hour on your projects.

**Other Services:** Job Placement; Service Bureau; CADD hardware and software consultation and rental.



Reserve your Classes now  
Call The CFA/CADD Training Center™  
at 212-532-4360



**Autodesk**  
Premier Training Center

We are a private school licensed by  
The New York State Education Department.  
Curriculum developed with The Boston Society of Architects  
VISA, MasterCard & Discover accepted.

**The American Institute of Architects New York Chapter is grateful to the following for their support of *Oculus*:**

**Benefactors**

Jaros Baum & Bolles  
National Reprographics, Inc.

**Patrons**

Charrelle Corporation  
DVL Consulting Engineers

Local Law 17/95 applies to new structures, additions, and vertical enlargements where the costs exceeds 60 percent of the value of the building. (All other existing buildings and new one- and two-family homes that are three stories or fewer are exempt from the new rules.) During the panel discussion, Commissioner Visconti stated that the goal of the new code was to ensure public safety, not limit business losses. Carl Galio to echoed his statements, saying that the code was designed with four things in mind: general life safety, property damage relating to life safety, functional impairment of a critical facility such as a hospital, and the safety of emergency personnel.

Given that seismologists have warned of the possibility of a major earthquake in New York City for years, Local Law 17/95 is long overdue. However, the primary criticism raised by the audience at the panel discussion was that the new seismic code is far too limited in its rules for existing buildings, many of which are completely unprepared for a serious seismic event. Local Law 17/95 seems to be an incomplete, but positive step toward an earthquake-proof New York.

**Chapter Notes**

□ The 1996 AIA National Convention and AIA Expo '96 will be held on the weekend of May 10 through 13 at the recently completed Minneapolis Convention Center. The theme of this year's convention is the value of architecture. Each day a series of workshops, seminars, tours, and presentations will be held, followed by a dinner and reception. Late registration is available. For more information, call the AIA Convention hotline at 202-626-7395.

□ The Architecture for Justice Committee is hosting two evening seminars to stimulate discussion on the current city, state, and federal courts programs. On Thursday, May 2, a panel discussion entitled "Courts/Crime/Money" will focus on whether or not there is a need for new construction of courtroom space. On Thursday, May 9, "New York City Courthouses: Budget vs. Program" will tackle issues and practical approaches to programming, designing, and operating city courthouse projects. Both seminars will be held from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at the Old Foley Federal Courthouse at 40 Foley Square. The cost is \$5 for members, and \$10 for guests. To RSVP for either evening, call 683-0023, ext. 21.

□ On Wednesday, May 22, the Corporate Architects Committee is hosting a Chapter forum on the effect of the virtual office on the future of architecture and planning. Special attention will be paid to the ramifications of telecommunications and the increased use of home offices, hoteling, and satellite offices. Participants will include Paul Eagle, AIA, of HOK Consulting; Tina Facos Consolo, AIA, of IBM; Leonard Kruk, certified systems professional; and futurist, Pamela McCorduck. Author Roger Yee, editor-in-chief, *Contract Design*, will moderate. The event will take place from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at the Chapter headquarters, 200 Lexington Avenue. The cost is \$5 for members, and \$10 for guests. To RSVP, call 683-0023, ext. 21.

□ On Thursday, May 30, the Learning By Design:NY Committee will host its spring forum, "Why Teach Architecture?" There will be a panel discussion on the role of architectural education in ele-

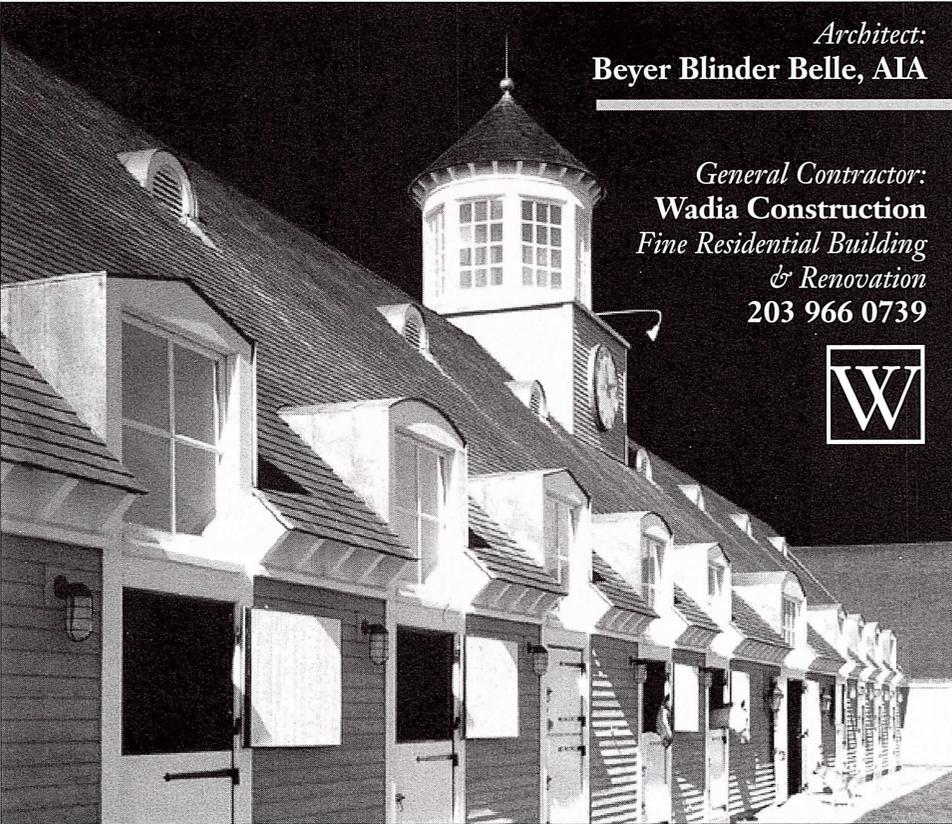
mentary and secondary schools, moderated by Steven A. Kliment, FAIA, editor, *Architectural Record*. The cost is \$5 for members, and \$10 for guests. The forum will be held from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at the Chapter headquarters, 200 Lexington Avenue, sixteenth floor. To RSVP, call 683-0023, ext. 21.

□ "Preserving New York's Recent Past," a series of three seminars addressing the preservation of modern transportation facilities of cultural monuments will be sponsored by DOCOMOMO (Documentation and Conservation of the Modern Movement) and the Municipal Art Society. Preservation specialists, architects, and policy makers will present problems and discuss solutions. The three breakfast meetings will be held on May 14, May 28, and June 11 at 8:00 am at the Urban Center. Please RSVP to Maia Mordana at 935-3960.

□ On Tuesday, May 21, the AIA New York Chapter Interiors Committee will sponsor a lecture given by Orlando Diaz-Azcuy, the acclaimed architect and designer, who will speak on the subject of "Sense and Sensibility in Interior Design." Paul Heyer, president of the New York School of Interior Design, will introduce Mr. Diaz-Azcuy, and there will be a reception following the lecture. The event will be held at the New York School of Interior Design, 170 East 70th Street, at 6:00 pm. The fee is \$5 for AIA members and \$15 for nonmembers. To RSVP, call 683-0023, ext. 21.

□ The AIA calendar of events is now available on the internet at <http://www.arch1.com>.

**CONTINUING  
EXHIBITIONS**



*Architect:*  
**Beyer Blinder Belle, AIA**

---

*General Contractor:*  
**Wadia Construction**  
*Fine Residential Building  
& Renovation*  
**203 966 0739**



**Civics Lessons: Recent New York Public Architecture.** *Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House at Bowling Green. 683-0023. Closes May 2.*

**Lilly Reich: Designer and Architect.** *The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. 708-9400. Closes May 7.*

**Abstraction in the Twentieth Century: Total Risk, Freedom, Discipline.** *Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave. 423-3600. Closes May 12.*

**W.P.A. Color Prints: Images from the Federal Art Project.** *The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave. 535-7710. Closes May 26.*

**End-of-Year Student Exhibition.** *Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, Avery Hall and Buell Hall Galleries. Closes May 31.*

**Help Design Frederick Douglass Circle.** *Charles A. Dana Discovery Center, Central Park North at Fifth Ave. 860-6321. Closes June 23.*

**Adriaan Geuze and West 8: Landscape Architecture.** *StoreFront for Art and Architecture, 97 Kenmare St. 431-5795. Closes July 15.*

**WORK SPACE AVAILABLE**

in architects' co-operative.  
West Village penthouse  
with Hudson River views.  
All services provided.  
No lease requirements.  
Call 212-727-9055.

**Pratt Manhattan**

295 Lafayette Street  
New York, NY 10012-2722  
212-925-8481  
  
Premier Autodesk Training Center  
AutoCAD, Designer, 3D Studio,  
AIA Provider

**BOOKKEEPING PLUS  
FOR ARCHITECTS**

(re)Organize records,  
project invoicing, banking,  
special projects, etc.  
Call 212-260-6414

**OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT**

Space available within  
architect's office  
(offices and workstations).  
Share our facilities:  
pantry, copy, library,  
conference, reception.  
Midtown South location.  
CALL 481-6363

**500 TENTH AVENUE (38-39 Sts)**

13,000 sq ft of spectacular, LOW COST,  
A/C penthouse space & adjoining 5,000 sq  
ft terrace w/ fantastic views of mdtm  
Manhattan available for RENT. Ideal for  
architects & designers, office, studio, &  
showrm use. A one minute walk from the  
offices of Richard Meier, Gwathmey Siegel,  
Vignelli, and Buttrick, White & Burtis.  
212-714-6422

**Law Offices  
C. JAYE BERGER**

- Real Estate Law
- Building Construction Law
- Environmental Law
- Contracts
- Litigation in State, Federal,  
and Bankruptcy Courts

110 East 59th Street 29th floor  
New York, NY 10022  
212-753-2080



BROKERAGE ASSOCIATES, INC

JOHN JOHNSON

*Architects' and Engineers' Professional Liability Insurance*  
A Full Service Agency

25 West 45th Street • Suite 1305 • New York, N.Y. 10036  
Tel 212 382 3717 • Fax 212 382 3866

**1**

*Wednesday*

**Exhibition: The Old World Builds the New, The Guastavino Company and the Technology of the Catalan Vault, 1885-1962**  
Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery, Schermerhorn Hall, Columbia University, 854-7288. Closes June 15.

**2**

*Thursday*

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT**  
**Seminar: Courts/Crime/Money**  
Sponsored by the Architecture for Justice Committee. 6:00 pm. Old Foley Square Courthouse, 40 Foley Sq. RSVP 683-0023, ext. 21. \$5 members (\$10 nonmembers).

**Lecture: The Grit and the Grist of Thinking the Unthinkable House**  
Given by Ben Nicholson. Sponsored by the Pratt School of Architecture. 6:00 pm. Higgins Hall Auditorium, 61 Saint James Pl., Brooklyn. 718-399-4305. Free.

**3**

*Friday*

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT**  
**Lecture: Education and Community Action, A Case Study of an Urban Studies Curriculum**  
Given by Nicholas O'Han. Sponsored by the Learning By Design:NY Committee and the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum. 6:00 pm. 2 E. 91 St. 860-6977. Free.

**4**

*Saturday*

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT**  
**Workshop: A City of Neighborhoods, Bridging School and Community – Tribeca**  
Given by Hettie Jordan-Villanova and Catherine Teegarden. Sponsored by the Learning By Design:NY Committee and the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum. 9:00 am. 2 E. 91 St. \$25.

**5**

*Sunday*

**Tour: People and Places of the Ladies' Mile**  
Given by David Lowe. Sponsored by the National Academy of Design. 1:00 pm. RSVP 369-4880. \$12.

**9**

*Thursday*

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT**  
**Seminar: New York City Courthouses, Budget vs. Program**  
Sponsored by the Architecture for Justice Committee. 6:00 pm. Old Foley Square Courthouse, 40 Foley Sq. RSVP 683-0023, ext. 21. \$5 members (\$10 nonmembers).

**11**

*Saturday*

**Tour: Daredevils of the Deep, The Construction of New York City Subways**  
Given by Joe Doyle. Sponsored by New York Transit Museum. 11:00 am. 718-330-5839. \$15.

**Tour: Hidden Treasures of Carnegie Hill**  
Given by Matt Postal. Sponsored by the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum. 5:30 pm. 2 E. 91 St. RSVP 860-6321. \$15.

**13**

*Monday*

**Tour: The Classical Architecture of Wall Street**  
Sponsored by the Municipal Art Society. 12:30 pm. RSVP 935-3960. \$10.

**14**

*Tuesday*

**Seminar: Preserving New York's Recent Past**  
Sponsored by DOCOMOMO (Documentation and Conservation of the Modern Movement) and the Municipal Art Society. 8:00 am. The Urban Center. RSVP to Maia Mordana, 935-3960.

**15**

*Wednesday*

**Panel: The Future of Work**  
Sponsored by Van Alen Institute Projects in Public Architecture. 6:30 pm. Tribeca Performing Arts Center, 199 Chambers St. 924-7000.

**16**

*Thursday*

**Conference: Engineering Innovations in New York**  
Sponsored by the New York Interagency Engineering Council. 8:00 am. John Jay College Theater, 899 Tenth Ave. 718-272-3338. \$95.

**16**

*Thursday*

**Lecture: Young Architects Forum**  
Given by Architecture Research Office and Mehrdad Hadighi. Sponsored by the Architectural League. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 753-1722. \$7.

**18**

*Saturday*

**Bus Tour: Architecture and Design in Lower Manhattan**  
Sponsored by Metropolis magazine. 9:30 am. Beginning at Castle Clinton, with stops at the American Indian Museum, the Public Theater, a Gaetano Pesce interior, and more. Reservations required, 914-631-7714. \$150.

**Tour: Governors Island**  
Sponsored by the Municipal Art Society. 1:00 pm. RSVP 935-3960. \$25.

**Tour: History and Nature at the Battery**  
Given by Randall Mason and Christopher Neville. Sponsored by the Conservancy for Historic Battery Park and the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum. 1:00 pm. 860-6321. \$10.

**21**

*Tuesday*

**Lecture: Sense and Sensibility in Interior Design**  
Given by Orlando Diaz-Azcuy. Sponsored by the Interiors Committee. 6:00 pm. New York School of Interior Design, 170 E. 70th St. RSVP 683-0023, ext. 21. \$10 members (\$20 nonmembers).

**22**

*Wednesday*

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT**  
**Forum: Virtual Office Features – Impacts on Architecture and Planning in the Twenty-first Century**  
Moderated by Roger Yee, editor, *Contract Design*. Sponsored by the Corporate Architects Committee. 6:00 pm. 200 Lexington Ave., sixteenth floor. RSVP 683-0023, ext. 21. \$5 members (\$10 nonmembers).

**22**

*Wednesday*

**Lecture: Reading the Landscape, A Personal Anthology**  
Given by Paula Dietz, coeditor, *The Hudson Review*. Sponsored by the National Academy of Design. 6:30 pm. 1083 Fifth Ave. RSVP 369-4880. \$10.

**Tour: Guastavino Tile – Don't Take it for Terra-Cotta/Sights in Lower Manhattan**  
Sponsored by the Municipal Art Society. 12:30 pm. RSVP 935-3960. \$15.

**23**

*Thursday*

**Workshop: Going Out on Your Own**  
Panelists from architecture, planning, and allied fields. Sponsored by American Planning Association Metro Chapter's Professional Development Committee. 6:00 pm. Office of the Manhattan Borough President, nineteenth-floor conference room, 1 Centre St. Call John Phillips at 718-220-8500.

**28**

*Tuesday*

**Seminar: Preserving New York's Recent Past**  
Sponsored by DOCOMOMO and the Municipal Art Society. 8:00 am. The Urban Center. RSVP to Maia Mordana, 935-3960.

**29**

*Wednesday*

**Panel: The Future of Downtown**  
Participants include Karrie Jacobs and Bruce Menin. Sponsored by the Van Alen Institute Projects in Public Architecture. 6:30 pm. Tribeca Performing Arts Center, 199 Chambers St. 924-7000.

**30**

*Thursday*

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT**  
**Spring Forum: Why Teach Architecture?**  
Moderated by Steven A. Kliment, FAIA, editor, *Architectural Record*. Sponsored by the Learning By Design:NY Committee. 200 Lexington Ave., sixteenth floor. RSVP 683-0023, ext. 21. \$5 (\$10 nonmembers).

AIA New York Chapter  
The Founding Chapter of  
the American Institute of Architects  
200 Lexington Avenue  
New York, NY 10016

Bulk Rate  
US Postage  
Paid  
New York, NY  
Permit No. 4494