

COLUMNS

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American Institute of Architects, Pittsburgh Chapter

September, 1987

ELEPHANTS, ANGELS AND FIVE MILES OF GILDED VINES

The Benedum Center for the Performing Arts opens September 25. David Lowry, project architect (MacLachlan, Cornelius & Filoni) reflects on the technical challenges of theater restoration. "You face challenges in this project you don't get in a much bigger building, even in a hundred million dollar office building. You have to think of sound, lights, the theatrical rigging. We've designed the entire building to reduce the transmission of ambient sound, from the front entrance to the backstage door and stars' dressing rooms. Then there are the theatrical systems. Where do the lights hit the stage from way back in the projection booth? And how is this man in the last row able to see the ballet dancers' feet? Most architects don't deal with these problems every day."

The stage floor provided another set of problems. According to Mayor Caliguiri, "Al Filoni (Principal Architect-in-Charge) promised me we

included sculpting the faces of some of the molds, fitting new work into existing work, and crafting each mitered corner by hand. Some of the casts were so large that three or even four men were needed to secure them into place. The largest were the octagonal coffers behind the ceiling rosettes and five-foot long angels atop the friezework.

After the plaster was restored and repaired, the painters took over. In addition to cleaning and repainting, they installed between three and four miles of aluminum gilt on the ceiling along. Subtle colors were achieved by applying glazes of tinted varnish.

Albert Filoni describes an historic restoration. "You are literally trying to recreate what was there in 1928. We try to use the same materials that were used, even some of the painting is original." Documentation has been made possible by photographs taken several days before the Stanley

opened in 1928 and by working drawings of the original building, discovered in an architect's archive in Philadelphia.

The elaborate, cast iron, seat ends were recast from the original seats, found in the Fulton Theater. Terrazzo floors and marble steps, hidden under a layer of tile, have been uncovered and polished. All 90 chandeliers are original, including the six ton, 50,000 piece crystal fixture which hangs from the domed ceiling of the main theater. Electrical winches, however, have replaced the mechanical pulley system used in 1928 to raise and lower the chandeliers. Fifteen hundred feet of brass railing have been removed, cleaned and replaced. Even the colors in the carpet are authentic; a scrap of the original was discovered in a heating duct during construction.

Continued on page 6



could walk an elephant on stage for *Aida*." The floor must be soft and springy for the dancers, yet sturdy enough to withstand repeated nailing of props. The floor was constructed of several layers: tongue and groove fir over plywood resting on two-by-four sleepers. The entire stage rests on a one and one half inch rubber cushion and when the ballet uses the theater, a thin vinyl floor will cover the wooden surface.

Inside the theater, the plasterers present the most dramatic picture. The Stanley sustained extensive water damage due to a leaky roof. A crew of fifteen plasterers using over a thousand thick rubber molds have restored and replaced the elaborate ornamentation. The molds were made from surviving sections of the original plaster, then new casts were produced and secured in place with molding plaster, jute fiber and wire.

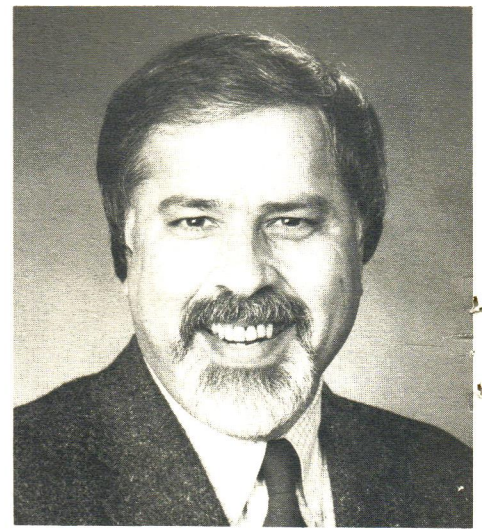
Bill King, head plasterer, presided over the casting shop where even the exit signs were formed. The most difficult aspects from his point of view

Pittsburgh Architect elected to National AIA Office

Sylvester (Syl) Damianos, FAIA, president of Damianos and Associates was elected Vice President and Chairman of the Design Commission of the American Institute of Architects at the June convention in Orlando, Florida.

Damianos, a former President of the AIA Pittsburgh Chapter and a past regional director for Pennsylvania, also served as Vice President of the Pennsylvania Society of Architects. He is honored to be the first architect from Western Pennsylvania to serve on the AIA Executive Committee.

According to Damianos, an architect must have the ability to pull it all together, to meet the program requirements of the client with technical competence and consideration for long range use. "It is important to get a priority of design into the leadership of the AIA. Good design is more than just the aesthetics of a project. Good design must work."



Damianos: "As architects, we must not only solve today's problems, we must plan for the future."

COLUMNS

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Robert Dale Lynch Receives National Design Award

Chapter member Robert Dale Lynch has received the *National 1986 Accessible Design Award* from the United Cerebral Palsy Association for his design of the *Howard Whitehouse Independent Living Center* on Centre Avenue in Oakland/Shadyside. The structure was transformed from a former two-story garage building into a unique living and learning facility for severely disabled persons.



Robert Dale Lynch (left) accepts Design Award from United Cerebral Palsy National President, Martin Rubenstein.

Lynch, who heads his own architectural firm in Moon Township, is a long time advocate in the effort to improve accessibility to the community at large for all people who have disabilities.

"Architects and architecture must be responsive to social needs," says Lynch. "We must broaden our spectrum to improve the *quality* of life for those who can't walk or talk, see or hear, and for those who are frail or spastic or mentally limited. It is a modern day and unique challenge we should recognize and engage with enthusiasm and vigor."

New AIA Fellows Elected

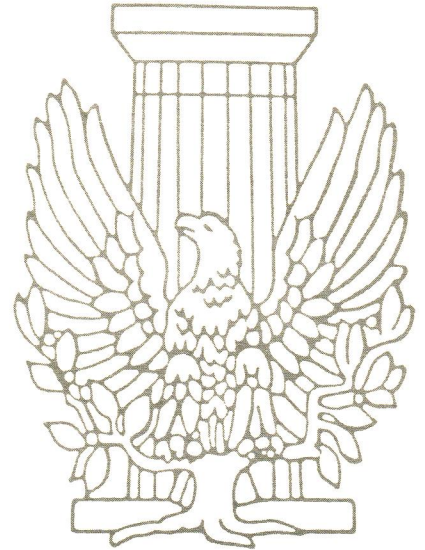
At the AIA National Convention in June, three Pittsburgh architects were elected to the College of Fellows in honor of their significant contribution to the advancement of the profession. Congratulations to Louis D. Astorino, Bernard J. Liff, and P. Richard Rittelmann. (Watch for their Profiles in COLUMNS.)

Notes from the 1987 AIA Convention

By Park Rankin—1st Vice President

Disney World Magic, Philip Johnson, global economics, government contracting, IDP, Kenzo Tange, and professional advancement seminars. How do all these subjects relate? Answer: The 1987 AIA National Convention in Orlando, FL of course.

From the exhibitors' booths to the professional seminars, this year's convention proved informative, educational, and exciting. The Focal Point Programs presented a broad range of topics: global economics with Pat Choate who explained "How well we adapt to change will shape our economic futures"; Philip Johnson and John Burgee on America's Design Future; Peter Rummel, President of Disney Development Co., and Martin Sklar, Vice President of Walt Disney Imagineering on how to make fantasy and development a reality. These programs, plus over 35 seminars and tutorials, provided AIA members from across the nation with the opportunity to exchange ideas and further advance our profession. This year's convention truly fulfilled its title, Architecture 87: Fact, Future, and Fantasy.



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SEPTEMBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Chapter Elections

DATE: **Tuesday, September 15**

TIME: **5:30 Cocktails
6:30 Dinner**

LOCATION: **CMU Faculty Dining
Room, Skibo Hall**

COST: **Prepaid for members;
\$13 for non-members**

PROGRAM: **City Planning Update**

Three members of the Pittsburgh Department of City Planning will discuss the current and future status of five key planning issues. Paul Farmer, AICP, assistant director for comprehensive planning, development and research, John Rahaim, senior urban designer, and Mike Eversmeyer, senior historic preservation planner, will address strategies for:

1. Downtown development
2. Major development projects citywide
3. Preservation of the historic Penn-Liberty Cultural District
4. Convention Center expansion
5. Major transportation improvements

The speakers welcome input from the architectural community and will open the floor to what promises to be a lively evening of discussion. Make plans now to attend by sending in the registration form below.

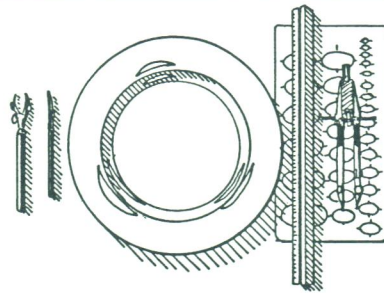
RESERVATION FORM **September 15 Membership Meeting:**

Name(s) _____

Firm: _____ Phone: _____

Please mail this reservation form by September 6 to:

Pittsburgh Chapter, AIA
307 Fourth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222



LUNCHTIME SEMINAR

1987 BOCA Code

Organized by the A.I.A. Professional Development Committee

The City of Pittsburgh will be adopting the 1987 BOCA Code in the very near future. This seminar will review the main differences with the 1984 version, as well as the city amendments.

DATE: **September 17, 1987**

TIME: **12:00 Noon to 1:30 PM**

LOCATION: **YWCA Downtown—4th
Ave. and Wood St.**

SPEAKER: **Mr. Henry Hegerle, P.E.—
Plan Examiner, City of
Pittsburgh—Bureau of
Building Inspection**

COST: **AIA Members \$20
Non-Members \$25**

1987 BOCA Code books and amendments will be sold at the seminar. To insure that there are enough copies available, please fill out, in the reservation form, the quantity and designation of books you wish to purchase at the seminar.

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Please send reservation form and check to:

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CALENDAR

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, General Membership Meeting. Chapter Elections/City Planning Update. 5:30-9 P.M. CMU Faculty Dining Room, Skibo Hall. See reverse side for full details and reservation form.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, Lunchtime Seminar. Downtown YWCA, 12 noon to 1:30 P.M. Speaker: Mr. Henry Hegerle, City Plan Examiner, Bureau of Building Inspection. See reverse side for full details and reservation form.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, Fall Frolic at Fallingwater with Frank. Well known Frank Lloyd Wright impersonator, Mr. Lyman Shepherd will present "A Unique Tribute to the Life of Frank Lloyd Wright," courtesy of William P. Roach, Pittsburgh Representative from Rixson-Firemark, the door control specialists. Mr. Shepherd has delighted audiences nationwide with his dramatic and accurate account of Wright's life from his early childhood to his later years at the forefront of the architectural profession.

The trip to Fallingwater includes bus transportation, admission, buffet dinner and entertainment. Bus leaves Firstside Garage (Blvd. of the Allies) at 4:15, returns 11-11:30 P.M. COST: \$22/per member or \$25/non-member. For reservations or more information call Lana Andrews, 471-9548. **Please respond early; reservations are limited!**

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, IFMA Dinner Meeting with Michael Brill. Michael Brill of BOSTI will be the guest speaker at the September 24 Dinner Meeting of the Greater Pittsburgh International Facility Management Association. His topic will be the Economic Justification of Ergonomic Design

Mr. Brill is President of BOSTI, the Buffalo Organization for Social and Technological Innovation, and Professor of Design at the School of Architecture, State University of New York at Buffalo. He is widely known as a researcher, author, lecturer and consultant in facility management, workspace design and ergonomics.

At 4:00, Mr. Brill will lead a seminar exploring economic incentives and financial payback analyses for ergonomic expenditures. The dinner will follow at 5:30. Location: Green Tree Marriott. Cost: \$25.00 dinner only; \$40 seminar and dinner.

Advance reservations are required by Sept. 12. Contact: E.F. Zuschlag, Baker Engineers, at 495-7711.

SEPTEMBER 27-OCTOBER 3, News Flash! Allegheny County Commissioners proclaim ARCHITECTS WEEK at the request of Chapter President, Bill Bates. Look for further details in next month's COLUMNS.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, Calling all quick footed architects! The City of Pittsburgh's Great Race hosts its 5th annual Corporate Team Competition. Chapter members who wish to run on the AIA team should register their names with Lana (471-9548) by September 11.

COLUMNS will announce upcoming events/activities relevant to its readers. Send **typewritten** copy to: CALENDAR, AIA Pittsburgh Chapter, 307 Fourth Avenue, Pgh., Pa. 15222. Deadline is 10th of month prior to month of publication.



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DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER ISSUE: Sept. 15