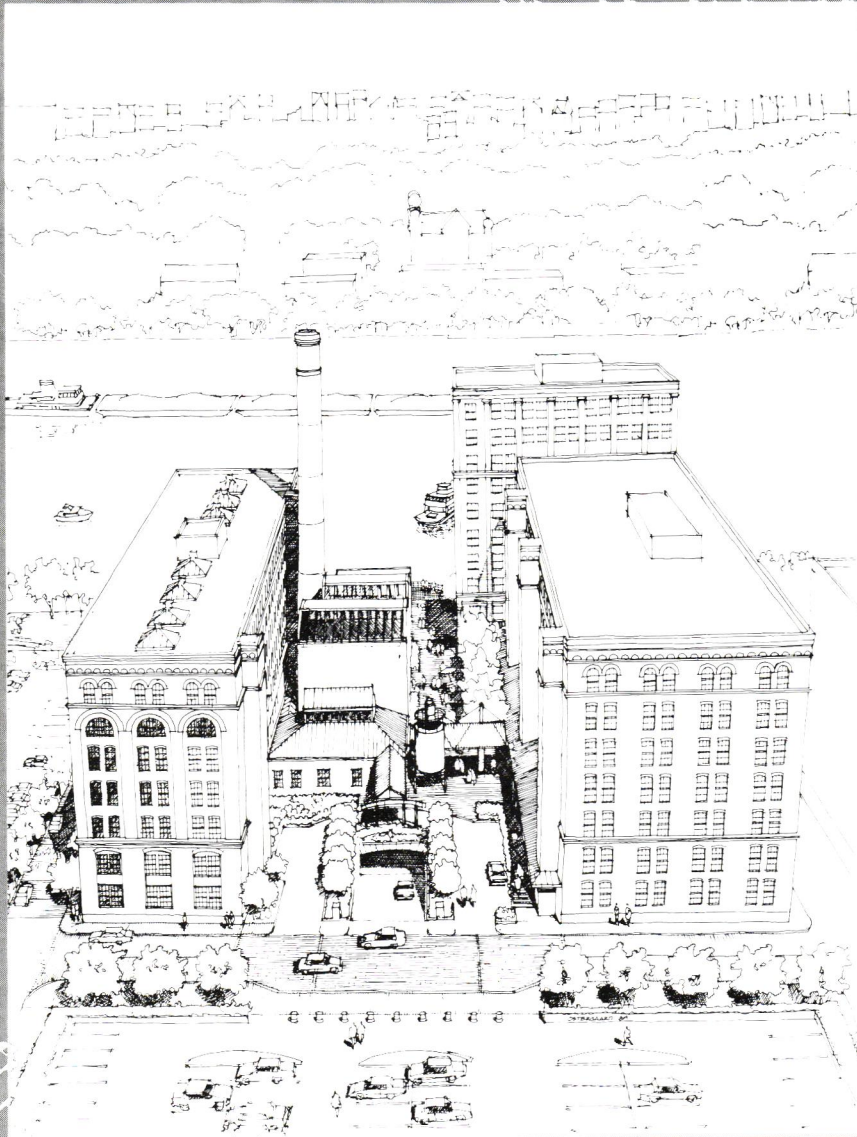


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ON THE COVER

After more than a decade of disuse and many months of planning, Armstrong Square will finally begin construction this spring. This Strip District project will be the first riverside residential development for Pittsburgh.

UDA Architects.

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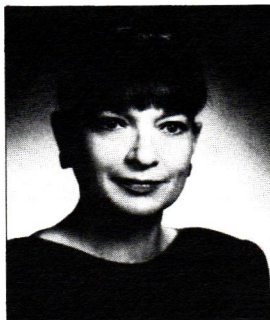
January 1990

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VIEW POINT

MARSHA BERGER, AIA, CHAPTER PRESIDENT



For ten years, my husband and I have owned a house in a third-world country. During this time, I have developed a feeling of belonging there, just as I have in Pittsburgh: the grocer knows me by name, shopkeepers wave hello as I pass by — in essence, I feel like a native.

One day I went into town to buy a can of paint to finish the project-of-the-day. While there, I was distracted by the sound of a marching band. As it approached, the shopkeepers, bankers, gas station attendants and children coming home from school all migrated to the curb. I felt very self-conscious in my paint-splattered clothes; everyone else looked so fine. Two majorettes, one on either side of the street, methodically stopped at each person to ask for donations for new band uniforms. I was shocked when the one on my side skipped four or five well-dressed people and came directly to me — I thought I looked as if I hadn't a penny to my name. Then it hit me. I had no color. I was the only "white" person on the street. Because of my skin color (or lack of it), I was treated differently.

Women and minority architects see themselves as architects, first and foremost. Yet factors like race and gender predominate in others' eyes, and can sometimes shade their views of an architect's abilities and capabilities.

This is why the upcoming exhibit sponsored by the Women in Architecture Committee, "That Exceptional One: Women in Architecture," is of such importance. The show, assembled by the Smithsonian, has traveled throughout the US for the past two years, showcasing women's contributions to the built environment over the past century. I find it a happy coincidence that I should become the first female president of the Pittsburgh Chapter as we approach our 100th year. Through the show we reflect on the strides we've made without forgetting how much territory we've yet to cover.

The exhibit also serves to heighten everyone's awareness of architecture. Pittsburgh needs more exhibitions, both national and local (especially work by our own chapter members). The public has shown an intense interest in architecture. Let's share our creative excitement. Let's celebrate architecture! (Perhaps I'm just a "party girl" at heart). Δ

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