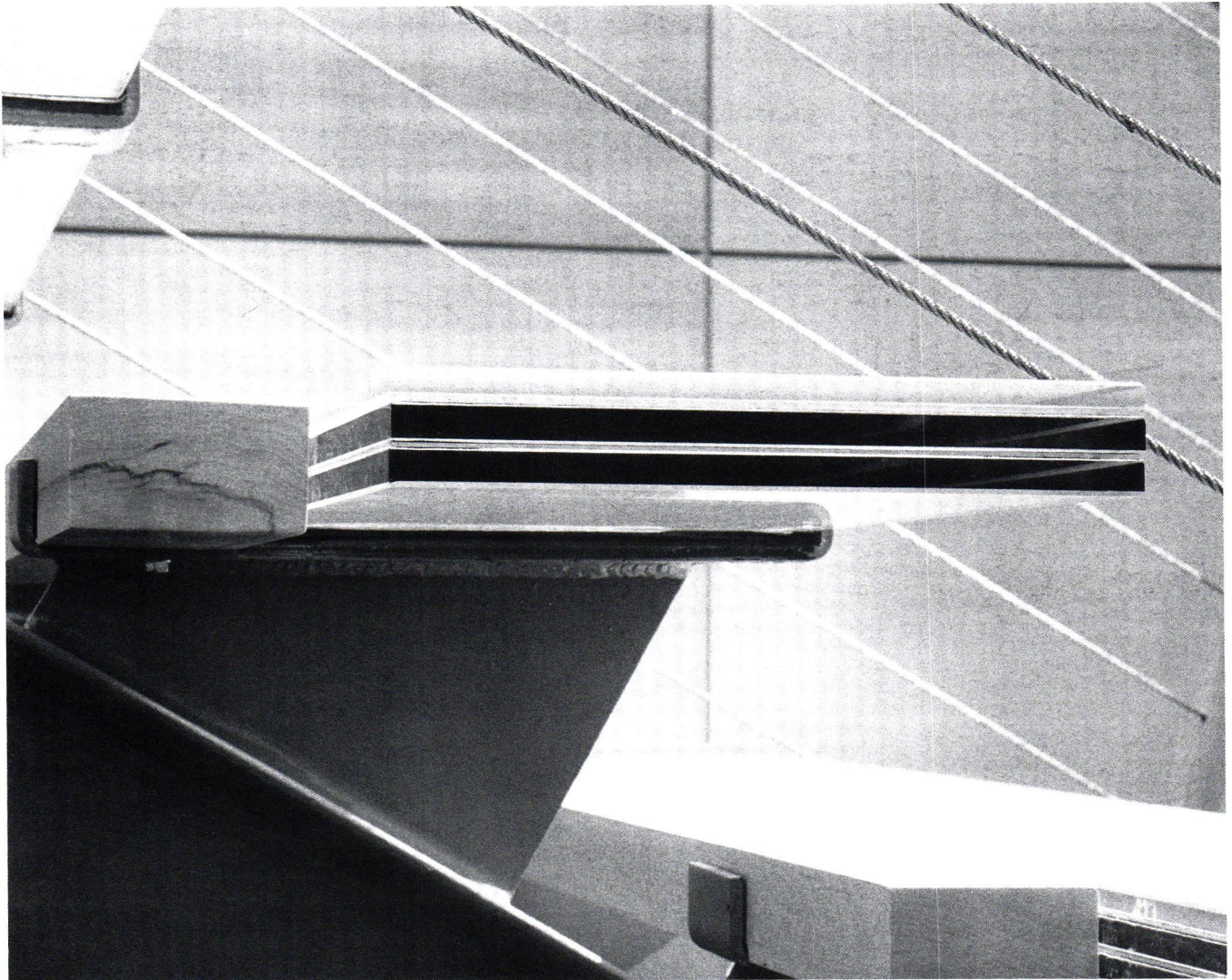
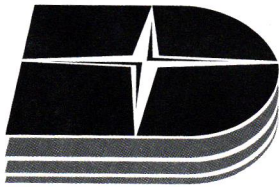


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Design Awards 2000



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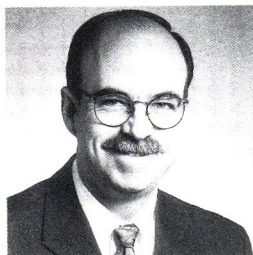
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Let the good times roll (and keep rolling)... by J. David Hoglund, FAIA



The Board of AIA Pittsburgh believes that these efforts have increased visibility and enthusiasm among our membership and the community.

Our profession greets the new millennium

with unparalleled opportunity. The national economic boom challenges Pittsburgh firms to balance growth and financial success with new technology, staff development and environmental stewardship. These opportunities have created new challenges for AIA Pittsburgh to focus its efforts as new regional development, expanded membership services and increased visibility of our profession have put pressure on already limited revenue and staff resources.

Like many organizations, AIA Pittsburgh holds an annual strategic planning process to establish long-range and short-term goals. Our activities over the past three years have been guided by a focused effort to:

1. Raise awareness of AIA Architects and the role of design in the community.
2. Increase non-dues revenues to enhance member services.
3. Involve AIA Pittsburgh architects as "players" in the public arenas.

These goals have led to the establishment of new programs and services to reach our membership and the community.

Creation of "Design Pittsburgh" to connect our profession to the community it serves:

- Installation of a two-week exhibit of design award submissions at The Carnegie.
- Establishment of the People's Choice Award sponsored by Columbia Gas (700 votes cast in 1999).
- Creation of a 24-page supplement to *The Business Times* highlighting all design submissions to the business community.
- Re-establishment of Architect's Saturday: a tour of local firm offices with a focus for college and high school students (250 attendees in 2000).
- Creation of the "Gala" event at The Carnegie where attendance has grown over three years to 500.

Establishment of a Revenue Subcommittee of the Board to assist in enhancing non-dues revenue:

- Member dues only pay 32% of the total annual budget. Design Pittsburgh has increased revenue from \$9,000 in 1997 to \$110,000 in 2000.
- Coordination of AIA sponsored membership meetings, advertising (Columns) and Design Pittsburgh events.

Involvement of AIA Pittsburgh in local public leadership:

- Successful inclusion of AIA architects on the Convention Center Design Commission.
- Partnership with the Riverlife Task Force on creation of their RFP as well as leadership by both AIA Pittsburgh and AIA architects.
- Inclusion of AIA architects on Pittsburgh City Planning Commission.
- Participation with Jim Roddey's New Idea Factory by AIA Executive Director, Anne Swager.

Nurturing the selection of architects through appropriate use of qualifications:

- Establishment of "Request for Proposal" on AIA Pittsburgh Website (www.aiapgh.org) with support in preparing RFPs.
- Support of qualifications based selection.
- Lobbying against House Bill No. 1029 to defeat "The Cookie Cutter" school proposal.

Increase member participation in AIA Pittsburgh events:

- Recruitment of 55 ambassadors from over 47 firms for Design Pittsburgh.
- Increase firms entering annual design awards (growth from 25 firms in 1999 to 40 in 2000).

The Board of AIA Pittsburgh believes that these efforts have increased visibility and enthusiasm among our membership and the community. While we have met many of our strategic goals, there is much left to do and many new initiatives yet to be implemented. This spring we will hold a "Mayor's Council on City Design". Modeled after a National AIA program, we will be the first AIA regional component to bring a workshop of achieving good design to the Mayor and his key staff as well as representation from the county. This is a significant partnering opportunity for the AIA Pittsburgh and the leaders of City and County Government. AIA Pittsburgh is also partnering with other local development organizations to establish a "Real Estate Council" modeled after Dallas, Texas which not only has created development opportunity, but has created a foundation to fund neighborhood based development. These initiatives will take time and resources and will be the topic of our 2001 Long Range Planning Sessions....we would appreciate hearing your ideas and comments. Let us know!

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On the cover: Detail Citation of Merit: Rakow Research Library Corning Museum of Glass, Ornamental Stair. Firm: Bohlin Cywinski Jackson. Photo by Steve D. Chaitow

AIA Pittsburgh serves 12 Western Pennsylvania counties as the local component of the American Institute of Architects and AIA Pennsylvania. The objective of AIA Pittsburgh is to improve, for society, the quality of the built environment by further raising the standards of architectural education, training and practice; fostering design excellence; and promoting the value of architectural services to the public. AIA membership is open to all registered architects, architectural interns, and a limited number of professionals in supporting fields.

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Online: www.aiapgh.org
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The Miss America Factor

by Anne J. Swager, Hon. AIA

When Ellen, age 4, was ill in Maine

earlier this fall, I found myself unable to do much more than read trash beach magazines. For a couple days, she was sick enough to need almost constant attention and by the time she was on the road to recovery, I was burned out.

People magazine was the perfect antidote. I found myself fascinated with an issue that reviewed all of the Miss America winners from the beginning of the contest. Naturally, they were all still beautiful as if the ravages of time had left them pretty much untouched. It left me wondering if there is ongoing scholarship money for occasional plastic surgery touch ups. I expected them to be more critical of the Miss America contest. Instead, they were mostly positive about the opportunities they had been able to take advantage of because they had won. I came away a little less jaded.

Like many competitions, our Design Awards program is subject to a variety of criticisms. This year, I heard that the jury chair spoke for too long; last year, I heard that the jury spokesperson did not speak long enough. Since I earn the biggest bucks, it is my job to explain why we do what we do while accepting and encouraging your ongoing feedback.

The most prevalent complaint is that the awards contest is actually a photography contest. You are right. It is. But without a jury with unlimited time to visit 98 projects and a budget the size of the gross national debt to fly the jury all over the country, this won't change soon. Even on the national level, only the finalists are actually visited by the jury. Perhaps it falls into a more favorable context, if you remember that photography contests work both ways. I never understood why Louis Kahn's Ft. Worth Art Museum was such a big hit until I visited. The pictures didn't do it for me but the real thing blew me away. Artful photography can hide flaws but even artful photography cannot always translate what is best experienced in person.

The other evening, one of my good architect friends gave me his shortened version of why the Design Awards needs to be more than a *beauty* contest. I don't disagree with his premise that basically Design Awards fall short of explaining why good design is good business and that sometimes we give awards to buildings that clients hate. This year, we worked long and hard to get additional media coverage which would favor the good design is good business angle. Along with unprecedented print media support, Bill Flanagan very generously featured two award-winning projects on his Sunday morning news feature. Naturally, we'll try for even more coverage throughout the year and next year as well. I've thought long and hard about the other criticism: awards to projects that the client hates and the inherent beauty contest nature of what we do. Perhaps we should add client statements to the binder requirements but I'm not sure they are really necessary.

In a world populated by look-a-like highway interchanges and interchangeable malls and big box stores, perhaps it is wholly appropriate that someone still celebrate beauty. Why not us? After all, at least in Pennsylvania architects design all of those ugly K-Marts and Wal-Marts and Sam's Clubs. By default, the whole profession suffers in the eyes of the public because of the poor planning that allows the profusion of such ugliness. Clearly, these blights are not the profession's fault and indeed, many of you have dedicated many non-billable hours to trying to reverse such calamities. So...why not celebrate when you can add beauty and livability to the places we live, work and play?

Not all of the award winning projects will necessarily age well. But like Miss America, some will fare well with further surgery and some not as well. Let's hope that in the end they survive and the ubiquitous big boxes are replaced by more award winners.



"The most prevalent complaint is that the awards contest is actually a photography contest. You are right. It is."

Design Award Jurors' Bios

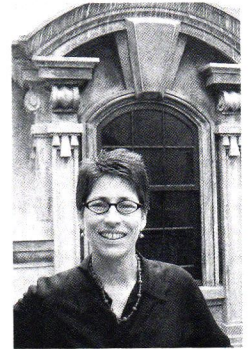
This year's jury chair, **ALEX KRIEGER, FAIA**, is founding principal of Chan Krieger & Associates and Professor and Chairman of the Department of Urban Planning and Design at the Harvard Graduate School. He has taught architecture and urban design there since 1978. As an architect, planner, author and teacher, Mr. Krieger is nationally recognized as an authority on the evolution of urban settlements. He is currently working with the Riverlife Task Force to develop a compelling vision for Pittsburgh's riverfront.

RONNETTE RILEY, FAIA, is principal of Ronnette Riley Architect, an up and coming New York architecture and interior design firm located at the top of the Empire State Building. Ms. Riley worked with Philip Johnson for 8 years before running her own firm the past 14 years. She has received numerous awards and currently serves on AIA National's Steering Committee on Design.

WELLINGTON REITER, AIA, is principal of Urban Instruments, Inc. located in Newton, Massachusetts. His firm provides architectural and urban design for museum, residential and urban planning projects. A professor of architecture at MIT, Mr. Reiter is currently working with Alex Krieger and the Riverlife Task Force.

Correction

Tracy Meyers of The Heinz Architectural Center is in fact the ASSOCIATE curator and not the assistant as referred to in the November issue of *Columns*. The



editor of *Columns* (who is new but that's no excuse) regrets the error, especially since she was so impressed with Ms. Meyers and enjoyed ASSOCIATING with her. (Nevertheless, it was a cool photo of her, wasn't it?)



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