

# C O L U M N S

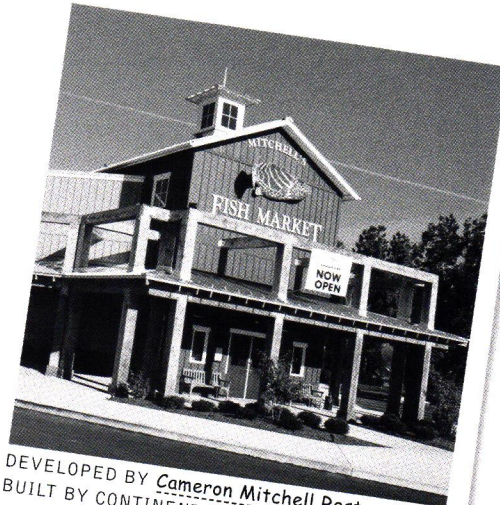
design awards • 2002

STATION A

NO PARKING  
8AM-6PM  
MON-FRI



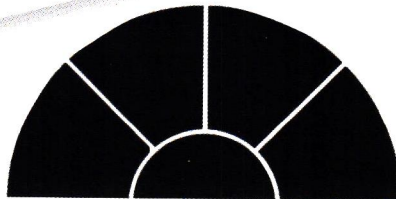
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# Whew. But It's Worth It.

By Anne Swager, Hon. AIA



*As advocates for the profession of architecture, we are always looking for new ways and more opportunities to tell the story of what you do.*

## As you sit looking through this issue

of *Columns* and this year's winners of our annual Design Awards competition, AIA Pittsburgh staff is drawing a collective sigh of relief. Our most hectic time of the year is over. Whatever mistakes we made are history and whatever successes we achieved are ours to celebrate. Boards and binders still need to be collected (hint, hint) but both the insert into the Pittsburgh Business Times and *Columns* are done. Life at AIA Pittsburgh will slow down to a more normal pace—until Tri-AIA in April, that is.

Design Awards, and all of the attendant activities, is my favorite time of the year. I love the excitement and anticipation of what might happen and, of course, I am proud of all the work that is submitted and proud of the participation of you and by your colleagues in the events. High points this year include the distinction of our Design Pittsburgh Gala as the first party ever held in the second floor of the new Convention Center overlooking the Allegheny River. Elsie and Henry Hillman were exceedingly gracious accepting the Gold Medal and Mr. Hillman's thoughtful remarks demonstrated his care and concern for all that you do. The party was such a good time that moving the remaining partiers out at 9:30 p.m. proved to be an almost impossible feat.

Architects' Saturday was once again well attended despite the more hikeable, less walkable route through Lawrenceville. (I was nursing a bee sting and carrying a bag of ice around on my finger most of the afternoon.) The students from Carnegie Mellon turned out in mass and there were quite a number of young people, with their parents in tow, making all of us hopeful that architecture is a profession with a promising future. Squonk Opera even opened their doors to the crowd as well as a metal smith and photographer in the Ice House adding a nice variety to the tour.

A couple of days before the Design Awards, Rich DeYoung, AIA and I took the binders to Boston, MA to be juried by Andrea Leers, FAIA, Daniel Arons, AIA and Angela Watson,

Assoc. AIA. This was a late in the game decision made to help us prepare a better presentation on the award's evening. Flying in, complicated by a Noreaster storm, was the roughest part of the trip. The city was vibrant and fun although the view coming across the river from the airport (Rich's idea, in the pouring rain) paled in comparison to Pittsburgh's skyline. The jury was quite impressed with the work they saw. They commented many times about the high quality of the work submitted and, in particular, the urban honesty of the design. There were even some unrepeatabe remarks about work from other cities where the projects were more developer-driven. I came away from the experience feeling as if, given the right opportunity, they would consider practicing in Pittsburgh.

The day after the Design Awards presentation, I had the privilege of showing Andrea Leers around our city. We started at the Convention Center, where we paid no attention whatsoever to where we were supposed to go but instead explored back areas such as roof connections; you name it, we tried to see it. From there, we were off to the James Turrell show at the Mattress Factory. It's a must-see show and the high point for me was the two of us giggling like school girls in *Pleiades* while we tried to figure out if we really were seeing anything at all.

Why do we do all of this? The gala lets us celebrate the depth of talent and achievements in the architectural community. Architects' Saturday is an opportunity to show future architects, or maybe just future clients, the settings where you do what you do. The Design Awards and the attendant publications help us make connections with the broader media. As advocates for the profession of architecture, we are always looking for new ways and more opportunities to tell the story of what you do. Your best work beautifully illustrates our point. Good design counts and it can have a profoundly positive impact on how we live, work and play.

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**On the cover:** Apple SoHo by Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, this year's Silver Medal Award Winner. Photo: Peter Aaron/Esto.