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# News

from the executive director, Carol Clark.

Unannounced, a large box containing carefully  
organized papers from the estate of George S.

Lewis appeared one day last summer at the

Chapter's office. Sorting through them, one senses the steady energy and appreciates the  
advocacy efforts of the AIA New York Chapter under the stewardship of this especially  
dedicated New Yorker. As executive director from 1969 to 1986, Lewis steered the AIA to  
public prominence, as is evident in his public relations reports, which summarized each press  
release and every newspaper story that mentioned the AIA New York Chapter. Even though  
we have increased the Chapter's public voice considerably over the past year, examining just  
a sample of the rich archives of George S. Lewis confirms the need for ever greater vigilance  
by Chapter members and staff in articulating the views of architects on a wide range of  
public policy issues.

The foundation of Lewis's tenure and its success lay in the emphasis on education of the  
general public on policy matters about which architects hold a strong point of view. Today,  
one of the Chapter's key goals remains informing a lay audience of critical issues that concern  
the architectural professionals of New York City. The 1995 Board of Directors, working with  
the Public Architects Committee, is seeking to do just that in the upcoming public architecture  
exhibitON, "Civic New York." The exhibition will present a powerful message about the vital  
nature of capital investment in New York City and the importance of public buildings to the  
quality of urban life.

Radio spots and advertisements were once the staple of the Chapter's advocacy  
campaign. Among the most striking examples of this historical leadership role is a *New York  
Times* advertisement from 1971 that boldly states: "New York Chapter American Institute  
of Architects Says "NO" to Transportation Bond Issue." Objecting to a proposal that "would  
continue the disproportionate and excessive emphasis on highway construction of its 1967  
predecessor," the AIA sought public attention and support. It appears that little has  
changed in the two dozen intervening years, if we accept the view of Intermodal Surface  
Transportation Act (ISTEA, pronounced "iced tea") critics who assert that the ratio of New  
York State highway to other ISTEA spending is way out of whack. Come to the Chapter's  
Planning Day on October 11, at 200 Lexington Avenue, sixteenth floor, if you want to join a  
new Transportation Committee to look into this subject, which includes airport access and  
other critical transit issues.

Although times change, certain New York City issues tend to linger and permeate public  
discussion for years. Times Square and its future is another of the many subjects covered in  
the George S. Lewis files of 1969-86 that remain squarely at the heart of current debate.  
Amid positive signs of the entertainment industry investing with government in the  
long-awaited revitalization of 42nd Street, the next AIA New York Chapter George S. Lewis  
public policy discussion will examine how this trend can energize components of New York  
City's architectural community – but not without controversy. Watch for the date in next  
month's *Oculus*.

Field Reports

by Matthew Barhydt

**C**aples Jefferson Architects is working on a maintenance garage for the New York City Housing Authority in East Harlem. This modest structure, 900 square feet, with an estimated construction cost of \$350,000, is carefully sited to preserve existing trees and provide a bit of respite in an area bordered by an apartment building, school yard, and elevated train line. Primary materials are a terne-metal sloped roof, variegated brick walls, and a patterned courtyard paving. The firm is also modernizing three Brooklyn Community Centers for the NYCHA and working with Finegold Alexander + Associates on the renovation of a school in Chelsea, Massachusetts.

□ **R. M. Kliment & Frances Halsband Architects** is working on the design of an 80,000-square-foot primary school for a site in the Bronx across from Fordham University and the Botanical Gardens. The New York School Construction Authority project will contain 25 classrooms, an auditorium, a gymnasium, and a library for 622 students. Schematic design drawings for three different schemes are presently being finished; the project is expected to go out for bid by April 1996.

□ An expanded and renovated library, part of the work **Fox & Fowle Architects** has done for the Spence School on East 91st Street since 1988, opened for use in September. The revamped facility on the fourth floor of the original John Russell Pope main building integrates additional stack space, workrooms, study rooms, and reading areas with advanced media and computer technology. Careful consideration was given to using finishes with minimal environmental

impact and recycling discarded construction material.

□ A new 18,000-square-foot addition to the New York State Historical Association's Fenimore House Museum in Cooperstown by **Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates** was dedicated in mid-July. The new galleries, which house an American Indian art collection donated by Eugene and Clare Thaw, were located underground in order to maintain the pristine landscaping around the house and to provide optimal environmental controls for the artifacts.

**U**nder the category Better Late Than Never: *Oculus* would like to acknowledge the winners of the twenty-eighth Bard Awards, sponsored annually by the City Club of New York to commemorate excellence in civic architectural design. In a ceremony last March at the National Arts Club, honor awards were given to **John Ciardullo Associates** for the complete reconstruction of the Hamilton Fish Recreation Center; to **John Tarantino, AIA**, and the **MTA/New York City Transit Office of Station Design** for the renovation of the 57th Street N and R subway station; to **FTL Associates Architects** for the design of the portable Carlos Moseley Music Pavilion; and to **R. M. Kliment & Frances Halsband Architects** for its design of the new Long Island Railroad Entrance Pavilion on 34th Street. A special citation was awarded to the **Longwood Historic District Community Association, Inc./New York City Housing Partnership** for its creation of a thriving residential neighborhood of renovated row houses and sensitively designed and built two-family homes in a once-impooverished section of the South Bronx. **The Times Square Common Ground Community** received a special citation for

the renovation of the Times Square Hotel into a model project of low-income housing and integrated social services. Jurors were Lee Harris Pomeroy, FAIA, Mitchell Goldberg, RA, Laurie Beckelman, John Jay Iselin, Jane McCarthy, Henry Smith-Miller, Peter Stangl, and Marilyn Jordan Taylor, AIA.

□ **The Metropolitan Historic Structures Association**, a major source of support for numerous nonprofit preservation institutions for almost 20 years, presented its annual awards in June, in celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the New York City landmarks legislation. Kent Barwick, departing president (see below) of the Municipal Art Society, Margot Gayle, president of Friends of Cast Iron Architecture, Brendan Gill, Ada Louise Huxtable, Philip Johnson, and Robert A. M. Stern were all recognized for "their pioneering roles in the creation of the landmarks legislation."

□ **The Municipal Art Society** has set up a search committee to find a replacement for departing president Kent Barwick. Chaired by Carole Rifkind, members include Laurie Beckelman, Joan K. Davidson, Fred Papert, and MAS chairman Stephen Swid, who is also leaving. The committee has met a couple of times and is said to be making numerous phone calls. It remains to be seen what effect these major leadership changes may have on the 100-year-old institution.

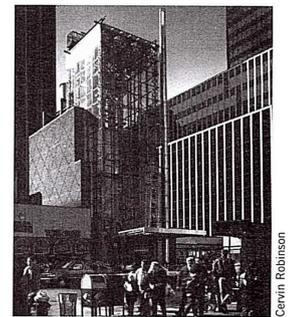
□ **Ray Gastil**, formerly of the Regional Planning Association (RPA), has been named the new director of the National Institute for Architectural Education (NIAE). He commented recently that the NIAE's mission of focusing on public design was "clearly



Model:  
New York City Housing Authority  
maintenance garage,  
East Harlem,  
Caples Jefferson Architects



Fenimore House Museum,  
Cooperstown, NY,  
Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer



Entrance pavilion, Long Island  
Railroad, Pennsylvania Station,  
R. M. Kliment & Frances Halsband  
Architects

Evelyn Hofer

Cervin Robinson

attractive” and not unlike the work he had been doing as director of the RPA’s Regional Design Program. At the RPA, “lots of things revolved around public design issues”; his interest has always been to figure out “how you actually create public environments that people will want to be in.” The NIAE position will also allow Gastil, who has a masters of architecture degree from Princeton and has taught landscape architecture design studios at the University of Pennsylvania, to become more directly involved in architecture and education.

□ The **Professional Services Management Journal (PSMJ)** reported nationally in August what most New York City architects have known for some time: Profits are up for design firms in 1995 compared to 1994, but the books are still weak. While offices are generally reporting an increase in net revenues (23 percent), a greater backlog of work (10 percent), and increased staff productivity (11 percent), higher group insurance costs, taxes, and larger debt have meant that firms are still balancing on the same high wire as they were during the recent recession.

□ The Society of Architectural Historians reported in its August newsletter that **Alvar Aalto’s Viipuri Municipal Library** is in enormous disrepair and in danger of collapsing within a few years. Aalto won the design competition for the library with a Nordic neoclassical scheme in 1927, when Finland was still an independent country. By the time construction began in 1933, the evolution of the library design reflected his own evolution as an architect; the traditional motif was replaced with the interplay of geometric volumes, light, and sensuous, undulating surfaces

for which he would become known. The library opened in 1935, and while the original building is still intact — despite local bombing during World War II and periods of vacancy — many components such as skylights and a curved, wood lecture hall ceiling have been damaged, poorly repaired, or inextricably altered. A phased, \$10 million restoration is under way, supported by the Finnish government, the town of Viipuri, the Alvar Aalto Foundation, and the Finnish Museum of Architecture. Former members of Aalto’s office will oversee the design effort, led by Pappani Mustanen.

**A Square Peg in a Round Hole**

by Matthew Barhydt

**A** reoccurring architectural argument about urban context debates whether a new building in an established neighborhood should be designed to blend in with its surroundings or highlight the contrast between old and new. Lincoln Square — the first complete, and by far the largest, of three towers being built by Millennium Partners north of Lincoln Center — occupies the middle ground. This controversial project is an example of why architecture designed to be both contextual and bold, no matter how carefully thought out or executed, is apt to be flawed.

Designed by architects Schuman Lichtenstein Claman Efron, Lincoln Square has two distinct components: a rectangular, 40-story tower, perched on a trapezoidal, six-story base. It occupies a full block between 67th and 68th streets, Columbus Avenue, and Broadway. The base contains the huge Sony multiplex with the now well-known movie-set interiors by Gensler and

Associates, a health club, and some retail stores. The tower houses 83 condominiums and 110 rental apartments.

Conceptually, the architects were skillful in the way they handled the massing. They created a visual link with surrounding tenements on Columbus Avenue between 67th and 68th streets by bringing the base straight up from the street to the height of the old buildings and then stepping the tower back. They minimized the impact of the tower by making it tall and thin instead of short and squat. It rises parallel to Columbus Avenue, almost mid-block between Columbus and Broadway. Because Columbus Avenue is fairly narrow, the tower is almost imperceptible at street level, though it blocks out the late afternoon sun. Looking uptown across from Lincoln Center, the tower can hardly be seen at all. By a trick of perspective, the 30-story Lincoln Triangle (under construction one block to the south) blocks out all but the very top of Lincoln Square. Only from across the wide expanse of Broadway is the tower in full view.

In the articulation of the base and the choice of materials, the architects were less successful. With windows largely unnecessary, there was no logical place to introduce scale and proportion and begin to organize these immense facades. Rather than taking their cues in rhythm and balance from adjacent buildings, the architects opted to treat this huge volume as a four-sided, abstract composition, cleverly rendered, but nevertheless flat and overwhelming — a celebration of size.

At street level, smooth, gray-black granite runs around the building, interrupted intermit-



Matthew Barhydt

*Lincoln Square north (above) and eastern facades at 68th and Columbus; Lincoln Square looking from the northeast corner of Broadway and 68th Street (below)*



Matthew Barhydt



United Nations

*Members of the United Nations Headquarters Board of Design and Consultants (above); Aerial perspective of the United Nations Headquarters from the Southwest, 1947 (below)*



Rendering by Hugh Ferriss

tently by aluminum-and-glass retail storefronts on all four sides, the movie theater entrance on Broadway, the apartment building entrance on 67th Street, and a 68th Street service entrance. A continuous cornice of a large and small aluminum channel — the larger one broken frequently with horizontal mechanical grilles — separates the ground floor from the shear, variegated brick coursing that rises above.

Seen from nearby, the brick is beautifully detailed. Small, orange-colored brick alternates with larger, darker red brick of varying hues and a charcoal-colored brick to form a stippled effect of light vertical banding. Between every eight courses, the field is interrupted by one course of glazed black brick, recessed slightly to catch the light and divide the wall into horizontal ribbons. Here the architects were clearly trying to manipulate light, pattern, texture, and color to create a windowless wall of interest. Taken as a small section of the facade, it works, but over the length of a block, it becomes monotonous.

Whatever juxtaposition of scale the architects hoped to achieve with the brick is thrown out of relief by the superimposition of far larger and completely alien elements on the southeast corner. Mid-rise, four rows of projecting aluminum strips wrap around the building and connect a flush, vertical mechanical grille on each side, set in from the corner. It is an intelligent way of turning something that might otherwise have been obtrusive into a visually stimulating composition, and this treatment does relieve some of the flatness of the brick facades. However, since this kind of gesture does not occur on any other elevation, it looks out of place.

Where the architects have been successful in matching the scale of the building with the scale of the surroundings is on Broadway. Here, most of the brick has been replaced with a glass curtain wall to reveal the colorful movie theater promenade. The tower, looming above, is a punch card composition of brick and glass, interrupted by three enormous vertical stripes of aluminum and glass extending two-thirds the length of the facade. These large elements make sense for this wide, divided avenue and the wide sidewalks that flank it.

The entire Lincoln Triangle, with its buff-colored brick and ribbons of white aluminum and glass, and the construction of the third Millennium project opposite Lincoln Square on the old Towers Records site, must be completed before the full impact of new construction in this area can be fully gauged. All three projects will have been designed by Schuman Lichtenstein Claman Efron; whether there is any unifying urban strategy behind them remains to be seen. Indeed, it is quite possible that these buildings will create their own context. A year from now, Lincoln Square may not be the anomaly; the remnants of nineteenth-century New York City that still stand around it may.

### The UN at the MoMA

by Amy Lamberti

**W**hile what happens inside the United

Nations building today offers little to celebrate, the Museum of Modern Art's small exhibition on the building's design offered hope that, if nothing else, the UN building itself still embodies the idealism of its inception. Mounted in honor of the United Nation's fiftieth anniversary, this exhibition clearly and effectively provided

insight into ten architects' collaboration for the future.

The selection of 35 original drawings revealed the common goals of the designers, the fruits of their introduction of modernism to New York, and the rendering skill of one of America's best architectural draughtsmen, Hugh Ferriss. A large model, revealing massing but no fenestration, provided another dimension, while a series of 15 contemporary photographs showed the complex as completed.

The UN building was designed in 1947 by a team under the leadership of Wallace Harrison. Ten international architects combined efforts to design a building that, in Oscar Niemeyer's words, represented an "expression of technical and contemporary art." While the influence of Le Corbusier and his disciple, Niemeyer, was made clear in the exhibit, it also showed the designs of five other architects, including Ralph Walker's scheme, which called for the complex to be angled towards the East River, afloat in a large park.

Most interesting of the other architects' sketches were those by the Swedish architect Sven Markelius. Quick pencil-and-pen sketches on paper from the Vanderbilt Hotel reveal his consideration of the buildings' interaction with Queens as well as Manhattan. Each study included a plan and perspective, with certain features highlighted by notes. The juxtaposition of these sketches with Niemeyer's — one page that includes three small pen sketches and a carefully worded verbal description — demonstrated the common ideals of the architects involved despite the diverse techniques they employed.

A large number of Ferriss's drawings described the design

process and showed the draughtsman's ability to capture the essence of different schemes by different designers. His charcoal-on-paper sketches, some touched with crayon, added immeasurably to the exhibition's impact. His diverse angles of depiction and use of shadows of night and day enhanced the shades of difference between designers' schemes. With a few strokes of crayon and manipulation of light, Ferriss captured the liveliness of Walker's proposal; in contrast, his stark, abstract treatment of Le Corbusier's scheme belies its basis in modern theory, rather than urban life.

Interestingly, the show made mention only at its end of the building's first curtain wall in New York. Indeed, the debate about slabs, glass, and modernism is here superseded by the idealistic collaboration of ten architects who successfully joined in a "workshop for peace" to create a building that embodied the modern ideals of rationalism and technological advances. The grid of the windows and the concise lines of the building echo the redrawn maps of the world created by the diplomats soon to be ensconced within the building's modern walls.

Today, the UN building is often regarded as less architecturally successful than the Lever House or the Seagram Building. MoMA provides a footnote that calls into question this judgment. Perhaps, the show posits, "architecture acquires symbolic meaning over time and reflects the success and failures of the work taking place within." If this is true, even current UN failures cannot usurp the history and power of the symbolic building that this exhibition revealed.

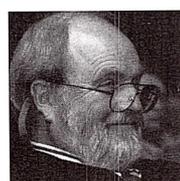


photos: Dorothy Alexander

Robert Geddes



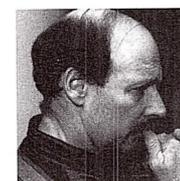
Jonathan Barnett



Donlyn Lyndon



Alan Ryan



John Spengler



Richard Weinstein



Robert Yaro

**New York in Context:  
Cities in Retreat**

by Jayme Merkel

**F**ocused on New York, Toronto, Los Angeles, Mexico, and Cascadia, a still-imagined regional city that comprises Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland, the Conference on North American Cities at New York University from June 14 to 16 demonstrated the near impossibility of creating economically viable, environmentally sound, egalitarian cities with dwindling governmental resources. But spirited exchanges between Jonathan Barnett, Donlyn Lyndon, Richard Weinstein, Peter Rowe, John Spengler, and other illustrious participants provided kernels of hope.

This prelude to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement's Habitat II meetings in Istanbul next year was organized by AIA president-elect Robert Geddes, Kenneth Frampton, Thomas Bender, Lyndon, and Rowe, with the New York Institute for the Humanities.

In his introductory remarks, the UN's Üner Kirdar compared plans for the upcoming international "Summit for Cities" with Habitat I, held in Vancouver 20 years ago. "In the 1970s, discussion focused on what the North should do for the South. The problems of developed and developing countries were seen to be different. In the 1990s, the issues we are considering are affecting every country, and in every country, you have a developed and developing part. In the cities, you have to look at how poverty, work, and the environment are affecting one another," he said. "With the diminishing role of the public sector today, everyone is expecting that the market will intercede. Can it? Will it?" Kirdar asked, unconvinced.

None of the speakers believed market forces would compensate for government aid, though many described public-private partnerships of various kinds. According to the Canadian speakers, the loss of federal subsidy is even more acute in their country, where it has been more generous but where even higher levels of debt than ours make its sustenance impossible.

Former Princeton dean Geddes, now Luce professor of architecture, urbanism, and history at NYU, noted that all the cities on the agenda were "seeking a balance between the 'Three Es' — the environment, the economy, and equity." But while environmental and economic problems were discussed forthrightly, social equity was dealt with abstractly.

Princeton professor of politics Alan Ryan approached it by describing views of distributive justice elaborated by philosophers during the last 20 years, which are also "found in the rhetoric of politicians and the commonsense thinking of ordinary citizens." Many of these ideas (articulated by Robert Nozick, John Rawls, Frederick von Hayek, and Christopher Lasch) conflict with one another. "You can't get from any of these arguments what a decent city would look like...though it might be thought that a city ought to display its sense of itself as a community — or if its sentiments are not so much communal as national or global, a sense of itself period," he observed.

"The notion that causes the most problems is Nozickian. Americans believe they have a natural right to do whatever they want with their properties," said Ryan, who is British and about to return to Oxford. "The British have always had more trouble squaring a proprietary interest in individual rights with notions of the public good. In Nozick's view (preva-

lent in this country), you don't ask whether inequity is good for the society. You also ignore the fact that luck plays a major role in privilege."

Ryan said, "the American political system has been rigged against the city since the 1880s, because the country runs on an ideology that is 220 years out of date." Division by state makes it difficult to govern metropolitan areas, such as New York's, that often cross state lines. The speakers from the Northwest, who believe regional cooperation is essential to their role in the global marketplace, all mentioned impediments posed by state and national boundaries.

John Spengler's talk on "how to make our cities ecologically desirable" differed radically in specificity from Ryan's. This Harvard professor of public health's slides of damaged lung follicles and statistics on suffocation from automobile exhaust showed that "we are living on borrowed time," but the life-threatening problems he discussed seem more amenable to solution than social inequality because they are technical and finite. Spengler believes there is some cause for optimism "in the environmental institutions, the students, and the new technologies."

Economic forces were considered only in presentations on individual cities, where they play an increasingly dominant role. Economic pressures make some kind of regional governance essential, but political factors work against it. So does planning at a neighborhood scale.

Jonathan Barnett, who started out in the Lindsay administration and now directs the CUNY urban design program, pointed out that under Lindsay "New York was in the forefront of neighborhood planning," as well as in preserving landmarks and creating the mix of tourism and downtown living that other

cities envy. But he admitted that neighborhoods can be parochial — they helped defeat Westway, Lindsay’s alternative to Robert Moses’s Manhattan superhighway.

In Barnett’s “capsule of the physical history of New York,” he pointed out that Manhattan “owes its preeminence as a city to its harbor.” However, the “topography that was ideal for boats was a problem for railroad construction.” It is also a constraint to regional cooperation, as Robert Yaro of the Regional Plan Association noted.

“New York was built by either long-sighted commercial or government planning,” with an expansionist gridded street plan suited to a mercantile city instead of a L’Enfant scheme, and “with zoning and multiple-dwelling laws that assumed there was a level below which building should not go,” Barnett said. And “although New York bills itself as a place where competitive enterprise reigns, cooperative efforts have produced urban amenities” such as Robert Moses’s parks and highways and the Rockefeller family’s projects — Rockefeller Center, the United Nations, Lincoln Center, and the World Trade Center.

“New York hit its economic high point in the late 1950s when it took on too many responsibilities, then power began to drain away with the suburban expansion,” he said. “The real solution to New York’s problems lies in the region” where five new edge cities have developed on Long Island, on the north from Westchester to Fairfield County, in New Jersey down the shore, between Newark and Morristown, and along the Princeton corridor. “You have to limit growth on the fringe where development has been encouraged with government subsidy...encourage investment in the center, and put together

the inside and the outside.”

Barnett showed pictures of New York’s scars and its planned successes like the Brooklyn Heights promenade over the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, Paley Park, buried tracks on Park Avenue, Bryant Park, and new infill housing in the Bronx. He argued for more redevelopment inside cities, noting, “all cities have amazing infrastructure — water, sewers, electricity, schools. In new suburbs you have to put in all this.”

Not only vacant sites but underused buildings throughout the five boroughs with utilities and public transportation ought to make New York an ideal location for the kind of “post-Fordist” production Richard Weinstein described in the most provocative presentation at the conference. Another Lindsay veteran and former Geddes student, Weinstein, now a professor of architecture and urban design at UCLA, maintains that LA’s sprawl is ideally suited to the small shops that produce parts of products, whether films or automobiles, in different locations. But he did not say why urban lofts would not work just as well, though he clearly praises the flexibility sprawl offers for job creation.

Weinstein was the only speaker who confronted economic inequity head on. He described a sweatshop in LA where Guatemalan women make carburetors under such Spartan conditions that the shop owners have lured manufacturing away from Third World countries. Though he does not applaud it, he pointed out that it argues that the growing presence in the West of numerous desperately poor people makes the traditional European city (such as New York) outmoded and the issues planners talk about irrelevant. “Quality of life is a middle-class concept,” he said. “Most of the

world is poor and just wants to put bread on the table.”

Although he admitted that “there isn’t a one-to-one relationship between built form and the economy,” he said, “most of the growth in human settlement around the world (and 60 percent of this country, according to the last census) has a form that most closely resembles Los Angeles — around Rome, around Paris, in China, along the Pacific Rim. I am making a plea for trying to concentrate our energies to understand this. There are increasingly fewer jobs and increasingly more people. The most important issue we face is to provide work for most people on the earth.”

#### **RPA Conference on (What?) Quality of (Whose?) Life**

by Jayne Merkel

**S**peaker after speaker at this summer’s Regional Plan Association’s annual conference suggested that what New York needs are unobstructed street corners and redesigned newsstands, even though their own poll showed that New Yorkers themselves said they cared most about crime, a sense of community, the economy, and good public schools.

It may have been the theme of the conference, “Improving the Quality of Life in the Region,” that led so many city officials, planners, consultants, writers, and civic leaders to give the impression that conventional wisdom today favors the squeaky clean, synthetic South Street Seaport approach to urban design.

Daniel A. Biederman, president of the Grand Central and 34th Street partnerships, talked about his groups’ efforts to “provide visual cues that will say this is a safe, nice place” — taxi stands with orderly lines, bright new street lighting, crisp, mod-

ern newsstands, and a common newspaper box designed to reduce the clutter of old boxes at street corners. He spoke of restricting vendors to specific zones, but did not mention routing homeless people, as newspaper headlines soon would.

Jeffrey M. Zupan, a senior fellow at the RPA, noted that in New York “pedestrians provide two-thirds of the surface movement.” He said, “walking in the city is difficult because the streets are crowded and obstructed, especially at intersections where there is a jumble of various street furniture.” He suggested closing some streets not needed for circulation, “banning street vendors, especially near subway entrances,” and creating more taxi stands.

Craig Muraskin, the director of the Mayor’s task force on streetscapes, said the city’s three primary initiatives were “a clear corner policy” (those bothersome news boxes again), automatic public toilets, and better-looking newsstands.

Just when I was beginning to think that I was the only person in New York who actually *liked* the funky old newsstands with scarves, ties, and gaudy jewelry dripping from their sides, Saskia Sassen, professor of urban planning and political economy at Columbia University, said, “I don’t quite agree with getting rid of newsstands.” She made it clear that what was at stake was not just a matter of appearance, but “the master images of a good environment — the meaning of ‘quality of life.’”

In response to Biederman’s statement, “You should start small, with every detail,” she said, “I’m a great advocate of the small. I think we should care as much about side-street repair shops as about the major financial firms and the big telecommunications companies, but we are also dealing

**Quality of Life Poll**

More people in the New York tri-state region are dissatisfied with their quality of life than in the Los Angeles, Dallas, Atlanta, or Seattle areas, according to a comparative poll released by the Regional Plan Association and conducted by the Quinnipiac College Polling Institute.

Satisfaction Index	Very	Somewhat	Dissatisfied
New York/New Jersey Connecticut	35%	48%	17%
Los Angeles/Riverside Orange County	43%	43%	14%
Dallas/Fort Worth	47%	40%	13%
Greater Atlanta	49%	42%	9%
Seattle/Tacoma/Bremerton	52%	42%	6%

**Long-range View of Local**

Community	Better	Same	Worse	Unsure
New York	19%	47%	19%	5%
Los Angeles	22%	48%	27%	3%
Dallas	31%	44%	23%	1%
Atlanta	27%	42%	30%	2%
Seattle	26%	41%	29%	3%

Would Move if Could	Stay	Move	Unsure
New York	54%	42%	4%
Los Angeles	57%	41%	2%
Dallas	61%	36%	3%
Atlanta	61%	35%	4%
Seattle	66%	31%	3%

In a recent *New York* magazine survey, residents of Manhattan said they wanted to stay in the city more than residents of other boroughs, and upper income people wanted to remain more than the disadvantaged.

**Skewed Comparison**

New York was the only older industrial area in the RPA/Quinnipiac survey. The other regions surveyed were newer, high-growth areas with which New York competes.

**Fear of Crime**

In every region, crime is considered the most important issue by nearly one in four respondents regardless of age, race, geography, or economic status. In the New York region, low crime is identified as the most important ingredient for a good quality of life. In all other areas, a sense of community is considered most important.

**Tax Exhaustion**

Residents of the New York tri-state region expressed significantly more dissatisfaction with high state and local taxes than residents of other areas. However, people in New York City showed less concern for high taxes than residents of any region except Los Angeles.

**High Taxes Most Disliked Factor**

New York City	2%
Hudson Valley	17%
Connecticut	17%
Long Island	21%

**Public Transportation**

Residents of the New York metropolitan area differed significantly from those of other regions in their use of and satisfaction with public transportation. More than half (53%) said good public transportation is important to their quality of life.

**What Matters to Us**

Economic issues are more important to New York area residents than to those of other regions. Respondents in all five regions named the same one or two things they like about their communities — convenience, friendly people or a friendly neighborhood, and a quiet, tranquil community. Clean air and water were also consistently listed as being very important. They rank just behind safe streets and just ahead of good public schools. Other factors cited as important to good quality of life, in descending order, were race relations, greenery and open space, employment opportunities, a sense of community, affordable housing, low taxes, and uncongested highways.

**New York's Image**

The New York region is viewed very negatively in the other regions surveyed. Only one percent had an "excellent" impression of the quality of life here. Less than ten percent would move to the tri-state region if given the opportunity.

with big things: the question of the new technologies and what they will entail for quality of life, what is happening in other parts of the world, and the role of government.

"A lot has been said about the information highway. One of the major questions is that of access, the emergence of a technical underclass. It's like the old Greyhound Bus that wouldn't stop for only three old ladies. Some places will be bypassed," she said, summarizing arguments from her recent book, *Cities in a World Economy*. "Is being left out of the digital grids a form of exclusion? The issue for small businesses, schools in certain places, and some households is not that it is difficult to learn, but that it costs money. South Central LA doesn't have a single fiber-optic cable-served building. Central Manhattan has 70."

Without actually mentioning the sanitized suburban aesthetic that a lot of the other speakers were promoting, she noted that the image of a good place in America derives from the middle-class suburb where everything is similar and individually-owned. Whereas "our large cities — Paris, Amsterdam — are signaling a new kind of image where questions of cultural negotiation between immigrants and natives are being worked out. Certain parts of this city are perceived as not desirable, parts of 14th Street for example look like places in Mexico. Is this bad?" she asked.

Cleaning up the streets may simply be a way to avoid confronting the real social and economic issues of our time. "In Asia, a new model of economic growth is emerging," Sassen said. "In Thailand there is a thriving middle class, but behind that lies an immense gap and people who are truly poor and totally excluded. The model of economic growth today is one that makes possible

superprofits in a way never conceivable in an industrial economy, but the census data are very clear. *Z Magazine* recently reported that in Manhattan the income gap between rich and poor is greater than in Guatemala, and within the U.S. is surpassed only by a group of 70 households in a former leper colony in Hawaii. The gap widened in the 1980s more than in any country with over 50,000 people.

"Given the type of economic growth we have today and the truly global engine that generates it, don't we need the participation of the government to somehow balance these exclusionary forces? How can we create mechanisms that incorporate rather than exclude?" Sassen asked. "The market economy and the government play different roles. You can't expect the government to always be lean and mean like a corporation. But there is something besides the economy and government, and that is civil society," she said, closing on an optimistic note. "New York City happens to be a place where there is a very strong civic culture that does create possibilities for incorporation."

She also put a different spin on the interpretation of the poll that had shown that nearly half of the residents of the New York tri-state region would move if given the opportunity. "Forty-two percent of the people want to leave, but almost 60 percent want to stay. Even in LA, notwithstanding the mudslides, the earthquakes, and the riots, more than half want to stay. There is a fundamental attachment to place. New York is after all a place that is not easy to live in. A lot of people want to stay, but we're going to have to rethink what makes it attractive."

**Architecture Research Office (ARO)**

by Debra Waters

Three architects, all in their early thirties — Adam Yarinsky, Stephen Cassell, and Thomas Jenkinson, the founders of Architecture Research Office — would like to say that starting their own practice in early 1994 was as easy as one, two, three, but it was not. What they have learned in the past 18 months is that “building a practice, like making a building, requires constant effort,” Cassell said.

Yarinsky and Cassell first met at Princeton where Yarinsky, who had wanted to be an architect since he was six, was a graduate student and Cassell “was one of the few undergraduates who talked to us,” Yarinsky said. Cassell, a more recent convert to the field, had been interested in metalworking. “My grandfather had been an engineer and jeweler. I was majoring in biochemistry, but then I took a course in architecture, and I was hooked,” he explained.

They both ended up working for Holl, where they met Jenkinson, who had a background in political economics. “Steven Holl was doing a project at the University of Minnesota when I was there. He took two interns into the office, and I ended up staying two years,” Jenkinson explained.

It was Jenkinson who brought their first client through the door, a friend who wanted to renovate a 5,000-square-foot triplex loft in Soho. Though the project fell through, the firm’s biggest commission arose in its wake — a \$4 million base building conversion of the 35,000-square-foot, seven-story, nineteenth-century warehouse where the loft was located. ARO is now turning the building into high-end loft apartments with ground-floor commercial space.

The firm is designing the lobby, an art gallery, and the top-floor loft for the new client, the Ajax Capital Corporation. ARO recently renovated Ajax’s corporate office in Telluride, Colorado. Though a small project, consisting mainly of pivoting panels and new partitions of curved, laminated plywood with maple veneer and a hand-waxed finish, it exemplifies much of what ARO strives for in design: a high level of quality in craftsmanship, flexibility in use, and responsiveness to budget and schedule. The \$30,000 project was designed and constructed here in six weeks, then transported from Brooklyn and assembled in Telluride.

The ARO office atop Varick Street overlooking downtown Manhattan is a working lab of ideas. Sketches and erasures, evidence of hard brainstorming sessions, cover an entire wall of chalkboard, the backdrop to computer workstations for each of the seven employees and a model-making shop. A conference table is surrounded by pin-ups of work in progress, mock-ups of product installations, trials in metalwork, models of furniture concepts. Their workplace reflects what brought them together — a shared sensibility apparent in their homage to the qualities of materials, testing of designs, and collaborative process. In the time they spent apart as educators and independent architects, they learned that “ideas are stronger if bounced off each other.” The Architecture Research Office, as the name implies, is dedicated to investigation and experimentation.

“Architecture,” Yarinsky said, “is research.” The practice of architecture enables them to expand what they know. Sometimes their exploration of light, materials, and detailing occurs independently of projects at hand. It is always, however, an essential part of their design process.

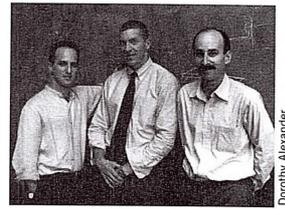
“Execution can be nine-tenths of a project,” Yarinsky said. “How a project is built is an integral part of its design.” Cassell added, “Until we know the contractor, we don’t want to detail it all the way.”

Jenkinson describes their design approach as “inherently contextual,” a matter of deriving design direction from looking at the program, budget, and existing conditions. The firm is currently exploring the properties of both town house and loft in an existing 6,000-square-foot space in the Flatiron district for a young couple referred by Ajax. “They wanted the discrete rooms of a town house and the open space of a loft,” Yarinsky said, “so we took the way they wanted to live and gave it material form. We designed sliding mesh screens. When they are backlit you can see through them, but when they are front lit, they are opaque.”

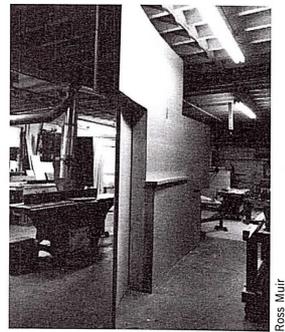
ARO’s practice extends to furniture and exhibition design. At the Asia Society this summer, “Monkey” featured hanging strips of fabric as spatial barriers against which art objects cast shadows. “Hopalong Cassidy: King of the Licensed Cowboys” at the American Museum of the Moving Image was notable for its innovative wall system of pegboard and suspended Plexiglas that provided display space for over 700 objects on 250 linear feet of walls.

Projects in the works include the Chapter’s “Civic New York, Design Excellence in Public Architecture” exhibition installation, prototype science and technology parks in collaboration with Edwin Schlossberg, Inc., and a 12,000-square-foot office renovation for the financial trading company, D. E. Shaw & Co.

*Debra Waters, a graduate of the architectural criticism program at Parsons School of Design, works for Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates.*



(from left to right)  
Stephen Cassell, Thomas Jenkinson,  
Adam Yarinsky



View of partition in fabrication,  
Ajax Capital Corporation offices,  
Telluride, Colorado

**Stephen Cassell**

**Education:**

Princeton University, B.A., 1986;  
Harvard University, M.Arch., 1992

**Experience:**

Steven Holl Architects, 1986–89,  
1992–93; Edwin Schlossberg,  
Incorporated, 1993

**Thomas Jenkinson**

**Education:**

Claremont McKenna College, B.A.,  
1982; London School of Economics,  
1980; University of Minnesota,  
M.Arch., 1991

**Experience:**

The Stageberg Partners, Inc.,  
1987–89; Steven Holl Architects,  
1989–91

**Adam Yarinsky**

**Education:**

University of Virginia, B.S. Arch.,  
1984; Architectural Association,  
Dipl., 1983; Princeton University,  
M.Arch., 1987

**Experience:**

Michael Graves, Architect, summers  
1985, 1986; Deborah Berke Architect  
& Associates, 1987–88; Steven Holl  
Architects, 1988–92

Dorothy Alexander

Ross Muir

# EXPORTING

## NEW YORK ARCHITECTS ABROAD

New York architects have been exporting their expertise for decades, but in recent years, construction booms in Asia, relaxed trade barriers, and the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe have brought a new surge of work and with it the realization that there is much to learn from working around the world.

### Cultural Exchange



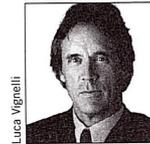
“If one isn’t culturally attuned to the way of life and the languages wherever one works, then one is at a disadvantage. It turns out that we can learn a lot from the way architecture is practiced in Russia,” said **Ted Liebman** of the Liebman Melting Partnership, who is renovating and adding onto the Ducate Place office complex and commercial center in Moscow. “Russian architects initiate plans of neighborhood districts like a mini city planning office. They understand how buildings fit in the open space, how buildings relate to each other, and what facilities are needed. All of the issues about context that were discussed only recently in NYC have been done naturally in Moscow. Everything involves planning; that is why the cities look so uniform. We are hired to help the Russian architect understand the role of the

developer-owner, which they don’t really have.”



Luca Vignelli

“Working in a foreign country really requires a certain type of person who is adaptable to other cultures,” said **William Louie** of Kohn Pedersen Fox. “The necessary presentation style varies from country to country. You have to be tolerant, to try to understand their point of view. You are always an outsider to them.”



Luca Vignelli

“The frustrating thing about working in foreign countries is that architects like spontaneous dialogue,” his partner **William Pedersen** added. “We can’t have a spontaneous dialogue when it is filtered through a translator.”

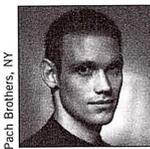


Abigail Scheuer

“One of the most useful things learned in these different countries,” **Steven Holl** said, “is that there is a kind of balance and tension that is continuous in the process of architecture, but if you keep your hope during this process, often a bitter struggle turns into a cooperative action full of joy. So what starts out to look like it won’t work, when it does, everyone is even more pleased.”

### Free (or Freer) Reign

New York architects are able to experiment more freely in other countries, but they face philosophical dilemmas about overdevelopment and how to include cultural traditions.



Pach Brothers, NY

“In Kowloon, Hong Kong, for our project, Plaza Hollywood,” said **Yann Leroy** of Brennan Beer Gorman, “we have been able to expand our design vocabulary. In New York lately, the taste is more conservative because we are finally concentrating on the conservation of historic architecture.” **David Beer** added, “There is a reversal of



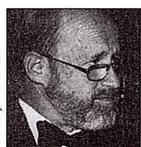
Pach Brothers, NY

what happened in the 1970s, when we worked in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, where there was a pride and an interest in their own culture, so we used the local vernacular elements. But now, where we are working in Kuala Lumpur, they have torn down the traditional Colonial buildings because it wasn’t their culture to begin with. What has been fun is that we have had to do much stronger contemporary buildings than our firm has done since the 1970s. But there are places that need preservation attention, such as Surabaya,

BY NINA  
RAPPAPORT

# ARCHITECTURE

Indonesia, which has over 20 square blocks of fantastic Dutch Colonial architecture.”



“The positive part for our firm in Shanghai,” said

**Bruce Fowle** of

Fox & Fowle, “has been that they are interested in new and exciting architecture. Our clients don’t know what they want until you present them something, so you have to define that for yourself. The construction managers aren’t there to tell the owners to cut costs. They are not concerned with a relationship between the cost per square foot and rental fees, as in New York. The Chinese want to flex their muscles with each building, to stir up an identity, interest, and excitement, because they have been suppressed so long.

“But,” he added, “I feel awful about the massive modern structures in China. Most are by Hong Kong hit-and-run architects who give the projects to local firms that do not execute them well. We can help with their planning process, which is now nonexistent, and teach the fundamentals. We can show them the mistakes that we made in the name of urban renewal in the USA. The culture of the people is disappearing. In Shanghai they are relocating people from the traditional two-story neighbor-

hoods to remote high-rise towers that are beyond the average bicycle-commuting distance.”



**Jerry Davis** from Hellmuth Obata & Kassabaum (HOK) said,

“New York architects think a lot about context and respond to the context, but the Chinese are looking for object architecture. In some ways the new towers have no place in their cities from technological and design standpoints. They are not looking at all at the context, because where they are building there is no context. All the new buildings are in suburban office zones away from the city centers. This could be the best way, so if the buildings don’t work, they haven’t lost the city core.”



The same pattern appears in Turkey and Venezuela, as **Richard Hayden** of

Swanke Hayden Connell explained: “Our high-rise buildings for the Isbank in Istanbul are in a corporate suburban area outside of the center of Istanbul. Their image is to get out of where they are, to move into the twentieth century. Our goal is to integrate experience and stylistic thoughts with the local flavor and keep the individuality of and respect for the coun-

tries we are working in, and then help to bring the work in those countries up to another technological level.”



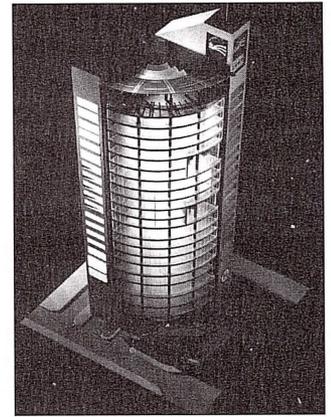
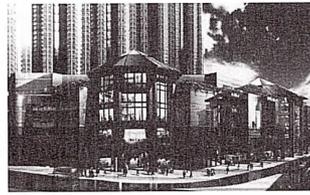
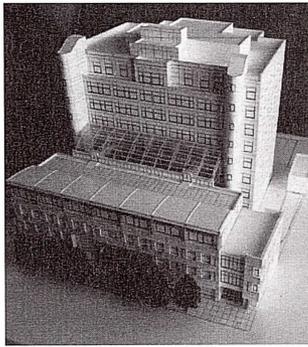
**Robert A. M. Stern** believes that Asia, in particular, wants to hire

American architects because “it is fashionable, and we know more about how to put together large, complex mixed-use projects. We have invented many of the paradigms for these building types, so it is both the desire for the fashion and the function of American architecture.”

## Incorporating the Cultural Context

Working abroad, New York City architects strive to create a new contextual union between the cultural requirements of each site and new technology. “Even tall buildings,” Pedersen said, “must be representative of the place where they are located. Whether in Chicago and New York or Jakarta, the proof of the translation of the work is the work. In our Mainzer Landstrasse office building in Frankfurt, the German building code requirements, such as the dimensions for high-rise buildings and the need for each office to have natural light, promoted the change in our design philosophy. We seek opportunities that reside in a place to inform the design.”

from left to right:  
 Ducate Place, Moscow,  
 Liebman Melting Partnership  
 Plaza Hollywood,  
 Kowloon, Hong Kong,  
 Brennan Beer Gorman  
 Jaha Shanghai Tower,  
 Shanghai, China,  
 Fox & Fowle, Gluckman, Liu



rendering by Yann Leroy

"We had to incorporate cultural aspects into the Bank Niaga headquarters building in Jakarta," Louie said. "We included a mosque, ablution sinks in the bathrooms, and pantries for tea, so the entire core is different from a New York building. We had to take into consideration the frequent separation of men and women. We had to consider different climatic issues, such as ways to deal with the intensity of the sun. We looked to their 1950s buildings, which included screens over glass with small apertures, so we developed a new brise-soleil system to shield direct sunlight. We also used local materials and crafts and referenced the patterns of the native textile designs in the interior."

worker requires a separate office. In the end, the offices for the architecture department did remain like an open studio, but it was a cultural issue, not an architectural one."

The snow removal equipment in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki "is a respected sacred cow," Steven Holl said. "It has to be lodged in the building, accessible 24 hours a day, and the edges of buildings have to be designed so the snow removal equipment can fit. The windows had to be triple-glazed. They are very conscious of the consequences of climate."

"The museum," Holl continued, "was made and conceived for that site and for Finland.... Each building and site concept are fused. I am not trying to import a style from another site. I am using a standing-seam metal roofing system on wooden sleepers, an almost traditional system, which they have the labor to build. It is the most economical."



Lee Meltzer

**John Gerring** of HLW. "In Saudi Arabia, because of the climate they use concrete. We had to design for wind and sun. For the design of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce, the client didn't want just

International Style ideas. We did precedent studies analyzing the typical fortresses, the internal courtyards, and the intimate spaces that screen out the sun and wind. We suggested these elements in the building by using details such as splayed walls, deep penetrating windows for shade, and the image of energy with a flame shape on the top of the tower.

"Cultural issues had to be considered in the design for the Korean Army Pension Fund office tower in Seoul," Gerring continued. "We were required to have operable windows in a high-rise tower, which is not what we would do in NYC, but the client wanted them even though they are more expensive. It is just a different sense of priorities. We also included a traditional wedding banquet hall in the basement, something that we would never put in a commercial office building here. Even the sequence of how they arrive in the building is different; there are multiple entrances with halls separated from the public space."

"In Japan they hire Americans because they want American work," Stern said. "They don't want their own traditional motifs. For the Greenbrier Golf Club at West Village, I made a relationship between the new and old, so that depending on where your eyes have been it might look Italian or Japanese; it depends which blinds you

wear. For Euro Disneyland in France, I designed the Newport Bay Club Hotel, a vernacular American hotel, New England in style. The French thought I meant Newport Beach. They actually came to Newport to see what I was referring to. There is an education process on both sides, that is the fun of it."

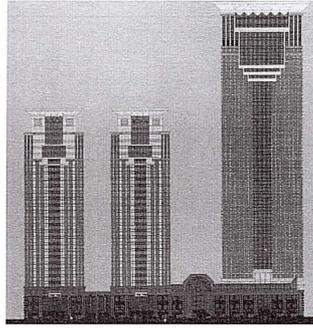
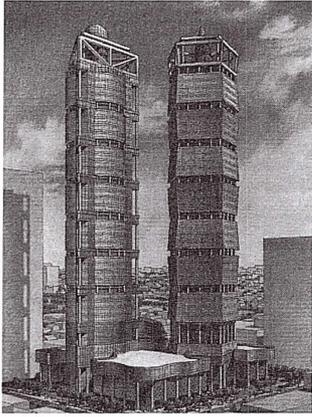
"In Germany," Liebman said, "we have been hired to work on apartment planning and make projects marketable, because American apartment building planning is better in terms of the way amenities are organized and provided."

"In some countries safety codes are nonexistent," Hayden said. "They don't have handicapped laws as we do, and they are creating world-class buildings. We tell our clients that if you want a building financed on the world market, you should put in handicapped access. Some countries only require one stair in a high-rise building. This is ludicrous. We are insisting that they should put in two, because for fire safety they will have to later. We also try to get them to spend a bit more now to have a flexible building with capacity for adding air-conditioning in the future. As Americans, this is what we can bring to other countries."



Describing the administrative building for Department of Haut Savoie in

Chambéry, France, which Polshek and Partners won through a competition, **Richard Olcott** said, "we needed to provide a French office building. It was not like projects in Asia where they want an American building. The French locals thought it strange that outsiders were trying to figure out how the French do architecture. Thus elements such as the creation of one large, open floor space at the top story were eliminated because in France each



rendering by CADD



CI & A Photography

from left to right:  
*Xin Zhao,*  
*mixed-use development,*  
*Shanghai, China,*  
*Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum*  
*IS Bank,*  
*Istanbul, Turkey,*  
*Swanke Hayden Connell*  
*Bank Niaga headquarters,*  
*Jakarta, Indonesia,*  
*Kohn Pedersen Fox*

In what Hayden calls “Two-and-a-Half-World” countries, rather than Third or First World, “they have electricity, but it doesn’t work all the time. So we must plan a building around the frailties of the local services. In one building we have installed three water systems — piping for the city system, a stainless-steel water tank, and we actually have a processing plant on the premises for gray water.”

“Architecture transcends cultural differences,” Holl observed, “like great music. When you can make it, it is transcultural. Especially today, why try to nationalize everything? Let’s speak of a transcultural hope of architecture that has the unique power on each site and situation. I don’t mean transporting a particular style from site to site. I mean that the aspiration and hope of the architecture is transcultural, but the individual architecture is unique.”

### Nuts and Bolts (of Practice)

The organization of work abroad is often unwieldy. New York architects often affiliate with local firms because they are not locally registered or familiar with the local building permit processes. Some firms establish offices abroad or send an associate over for the duration of a project. Many have mini exchange programs with foreign architects. “We learn from the way they are taught and the techniques that they use,” Richard Hayden said. But now, with fax and computer

teleconferencing, it is possible make a few trips abroad a year and then do most of the work from New York.

Most architects working in China note difficulties in getting paid. “In Shanghai,” Fowle said, “they pay us a large 20 percent retainer fee, but all that is prepayment for schematic design, and we are not paid again until design development. We are trying to change that system. Additional services and design changes are also difficult to charge for, besides the fact that the approval process is tedious, about 17 government agencies review the documents. If we had our druthers, we would work for Western clients in China.”

The control of working drawings and the construction process is also challenging. Some offices complete the design development phase, and then the local architect or contractor takes on the project, while other firms follow the project through to completion with their own architect or construction manager on site.



Dick Frank

“In my project in Tokyo for the Nunotani Publishing Company,”

**Peter Eisenman** said, “we did the detailed design development, and then the construction company completed the construction documents, so that it was not possible to make change

orders. It is a very smooth working process, and there is not the game being played by contractors to find mistakes to charge extras. But if you see a detail that you want to change, you can’t correct it. This was a very distancing experience. I prefer doing the working drawings and site supervision. In Japan they produce quality buildings, but it removes you from the process.”



“It was illuminating to deal with European manufacturers,” **Charles**

**Gwathmey** said, “and finally to be able to build a solid building in Switzerland. You feel that the house is forever and that it will also make a great ruin. But the construction was a bit problematic because the level of invention was a bit limited. I wanted to make the shutters integral to the facade, making them part of the windows, so it wasn’t as if they were added. But the Swiss couldn’t do it that way. They resisted reinventing technological elements because they had a standardized way of doing things and were not flexible.”

The negotiation processes are also different in each country. “Our meetings in Singapore for the Nanyang Polytechnic were like a therapy session,” Gwathmey said. “First you discuss all of the black things and then the white. It was a very unemotional and open way of

communication. Their goal was design, flexibility, and a future consensus. When we work on another university in the USA, we can bring an alternative experience to the table and say, look, there is another possibility, in Singapore we did it this way.”

Leroy said that to him a “surprising thing was that the developer of Plaza Hollywood in Hong Kong personally had power over the project day to day. We had to meet with him and show him sketches until he was satisfied. He took a personal interest in the project until it was approved.”



Luca Vignelli

Part of working in Germany “was getting used to a new time-frame for

a project,” **Richard Meier** said. “I won the Frankfurt Museum project in 1979, but the construction schedule was to complete the building in six years, while the High Museum in Atlanta began a year later, and was designed and built in three years. Each was on schedule, but the schedules were just different. As an American I’m used to seeing things built quickly. The quality of work was excellent; you just have to relax a little bit.”

top: left to right,  
Ministry of Construction,  
Chambéry-le-Heu, France,  
Polshek and Partners

The Greenbrier West Village  
Golf Resort, Japan,  
Robert A. M. Stern Architects

Exhibition and Assembly  
Building, Ulm, Richard Meier

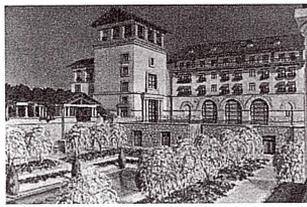
bottom: left to right,  
Kuwait Chamber of Commerce,  
Kuwait, Saudi Arabia,  
Haines Lundberg Waehler

Nunotani Building,  
Tokyo, Japan,  
Eisenman Architects

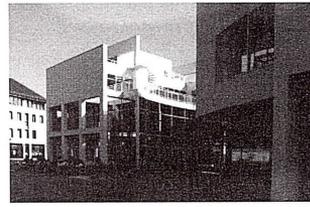
Bechtler Residence, Zurich,  
Gwathmey Siegel & Associates  
Architects



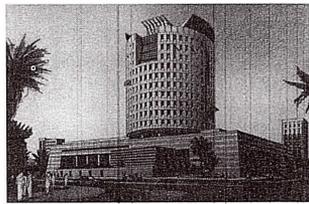
Amin Salomon



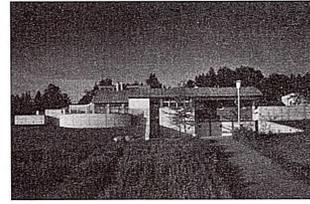
rendering: Robert A.M. Stern Architects



Nina Rappaport



Shigeo Ogawa/Stimichiku



Richard Bryant

## Prophets in Other Lands

New York architects feel more appreciated in foreign countries, especially Europe, where architecture is part of the public realm. "German and Swiss public officials are far more interested in a theoretical attitude towards architecture," Eisenman said. "The difference is that ideology, politics in the best sense of the word, participatory politics, plays a much greater role in European countries than in America. In Europe, capital, in the form of developers, has a different role in the acquisition of land and the development of projects than in the USA. Also the media is far more ideological and deals with social and cultural issues, not just stylistic issues. It encourages city planning commissions and the senate of Berlin to ask architects like Gehry and myself, who are considered high-risk in this country by developers, to participate in design projects.

"What has happened in the United States is a loss of will about the public sector," Eisenman continued. "One can see it in the appropriations for the NEA. The AIA must be involved in becoming an important factor in politics."

"It is difficult to do new and exciting work in New York," Fowle said. "The talent is here, not in China. New York architects are doing exciting work in China. It is too bad. Because of the constraints here, there will

be a backlash. Suddenly we will realize that the more exciting things are happening elsewhere. There is a much greater value placed on architecture almost everywhere else in the world. A lot of the problem is with American education; people with power and money aren't trained to place value on aesthetics and architecture. It is a matter of civic pride. Here the public process is always to tone down buildings, not to make them better.

"The leadership since JFK has had no interest in the quality of public architecture," he said. "It is not in the dialogue. Public awareness has dissipated. One can't even vote for someone who is interested in architecture. The only senator who has had any interest is Moynihan."

"In Europe," Meier said, "there is a greater respect for architecture. The history of each place is very much in everyone's mind; it is a part of each culture. In spite of increased public awareness in the USA, we are nowhere near their level. In Europe the education of the average person somehow includes a sensibility to architecture."

The government had so many public referendums and debates for Meier's Ulm Exhibition and Assembly Building "that the voting went on forever. But it is the democratic system. The mayor

and the people were for the project, so it prevailed. The surprising thing is the degree to which so many projects are a public debate, not only criticizing the design, but also of getting the approvals.

"After the competition for the Museum for Decorative Arts in Frankfurt, there was an election for mayor," Meier continued. "One of the people running for mayor wanted to build housing on the same site as the museum. It became a public debate whether or not to build the museum. It was seen as too big to accommodate housing on the site as well, but no one saw the site as appropriate for housing. The architect has to get involved in a public discussion. In Europe it is a citywide issue rather than just a local issue, as in New York."

"Even in the small Alpine town of Chambéry, France," Olcott said, "the people are aware of high style architecture and look to the future. They know about the architecture in Paris and want new buildings to show the importance of their town."

"In Western Europe," his colleague James Polshek said, "the programs are very pure, and the building is a machine. Our project in Chambéry, lent itself to absolute refinement of the clearest expression of program. You don't fall into that kind of project here. It didn't depend on a trademark. Each project is

on its own, and you are more likely to have that opportunity in Europe."

For the museum competition in Helsinki, Holl said that "they invited four architects and required that the architects represent different cultures and not be of the generation that had built a major museum. It is the opposite of what normally gets you work in the USA. I am surprised that the attitude of the forces that be in many other places have a definite cultural thirst and not a business-as-usual, pragmatic, give-it-to-the-huge-firm approach. It makes me wonder, How did we get this way?"

"The German standards for tall buildings," Pedersen said, "are the most humane and have direct community involvement. If we were to build a German office building in New York, it would not meet the codes, but it also wouldn't survive in the real estate market. To change the system here would alter the entire market. The community planning process and authorities in Europe put the developers at their mercy. All architects, of course, enjoy working in Europe. You are highly respected. We have much less leverage here."

*Nina Rappaport wrote about architecture in Europe before returning to New York City last year.*

## How Much Architecture Is Enough?

by Jayne Merkel

**W**hile John Morris Dixon's editorial on the failure of design nerve at the Atlanta Olympics was still on our desks, *The Atlantic Monthly* ran a story on the French national commitment to design, embodied in President François Mitterand's just-completed *grands travaux*. And headlines in *The Cincinnati Enquirer* screamed, "\$36 million and rising, UC building soars \$16 million over plan," skewering Peter Eisenman's College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning at the University of Cincinnati, a daring series of pastel-toned, irregular polygons half-buried in the landscape.

An uproar like the one in Cincinnati is clearly what Olympic officials were trying to avoid. "It is a weakness of our present culture that we are so often forced to choose between practicality and aesthetic satisfaction.... Those who promote architectural innovation, fine materials, or spatial qualities beyond quantifiable requirements are likely to be seen as promoting the grandiose and wasteful, probably for their own advantage," Dixon wrote in the July *Progressive Architecture*. "While corporate management is pressured to avoid extravagance — at least in buildings — government officials must now be downright apologetic about deciding to build at all. The promise by Atlanta officials that no government funds would be spent on Olympic facilities would have been unnecessary — even unthinkable — in past decades."

Cost may only be an excuse for the timidity. "Money is, of

course, a critical part of the problem," Dixon said. "But many decision-makers — like the Atlanta officials — are willing enough to spend money; they just want to make certain that none of that money is spent on adventurous design. Their public, they have concluded, will construe unconventional design as an unforgivable extravagance."

Not so in France, David Lawday, author of *The Atlantic's* "Paris Is Finished" found: "Without the tiring distraction of debate in Parliament, a good \$6 billion of taxpayers' money was spent at the President's personal behest on the renewal of Paris." And, "In touring the *grands travaux* I met not a soul who suggested that the billions might have been spent on shrinking France's social-security deficit or on some other desperate national problem."

In America, ambitious architecture (and other arts) are suspect from the start. Anything that goes wrong merely reinforces the prejudice.

That is certainly what the Cincinnati article by reporter Leah Beth Ward did, highlighting expenditures and architects' fees boldly in charts. It did mention that the building received a *P/A* design award and was shown at the Venice Architectural Biennale. And it said, "The always provocative Eisenman is a widely respected teacher and critic of architecture. His designs become a focal point for the worldwide debate over post-modern architecture." In the end, the page-and-a-half, eight-column spread concluded that the pioneering building would have been okay if it just hadn't cost (the taxpayers) so much.

Those changes and additions were made to the original program, the art school came in over budget largely *because* of its pioneering design, composed of partially submerged chambers with sloping floors, ceilings, and walls, which trace the imprints of a series of slightly askew International Style structures that housed the school before the addition was planned.

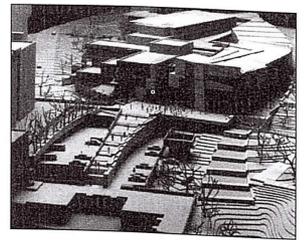
Eisenman was hired to design a groundbreaking building that would put the college on the map and force the students who use it to constantly consider what their disciplines entail. Its irregular forms, inconceivable without computer technology, prolonged the bidding process and boosted the budget, but they were what the client ordered. Even the *Enquirer* exposé admitted, "UC trustees endorsed the project all the way, and were so grateful for their pipeline to state funds that they named the building after Stanley J. Aronoff, the Cincinnati Republican and powerful president of the Ohio Senate."

A public building like the one in question is designed to serve many clients — university administrators, trustees, and the talented faculty and students that the college's dean, Jayanta Chatterjee, believes the building will help him attract. Are the taxpayers even among them, as the article suggests?

However, when an innovative building comes in substantially over budget, it feeds the prejudice against ambition in design. Before Eisenman was brought in to program the building in the mid-1980s, the University of Cincinnati hired local architects with political connections who produced banal buildings at best. After Eisenman became involved

(and after he had designed the Wexner Center at Ohio State), the university developed a "signature architects" program and started interviewing architects of national stature to work in partnership with Ohio practitioners. Eisenman won the DAAP commission. David Childs of SOM New York built a dignified small office building on the campus. The Cambridge Seven created a festive new power station. Michael Graves completed a new Engineering Research Center. Pei Cobb Freed is designing an addition to the College Conservatory of Music, and Frank Gehry has been commissioned to design a new molecular sciences building.

"Not every major architectural undertaking on the UC campus has been as tortured as the DAAP process," the newspaper critique noted at the end. But most people who read only the headlines will come away, as usual, with the idea that innovative architecture is an irresponsible, wasteful extravagance.



University of Cincinnati  
College of Design, Art,  
Architecture and Planning,  
Eisenman Architects

**What Will Be the Effect of the Cuts at the School of Architecture at City College?**

Although the worse-case scenario for the School of Architecture and Environmental Studies at the City University of New York did not come to pass – the school did not close – the architecture program lost its status as an independent school and became a part of the division of professional studies. It lost about \$250,000 of its 1995–96 budget, with further reductions expected for the 1996 and 1997 school years. It also lost many talented young teachers, because the tenure system virtually guarantees employment to senior faculty whose salaries can be as much as ten times those of adjuncts.

“When I heard that the school might be closed, it almost broke my heart. It would have kept middle- and working-class and immigrant groups from gaining access to the profession of architecture, because today it’s just too expensive.

“I liked the vision of the school when I started teaching there 26 years ago, and I like it now. We have trained what has become the major cadre of many New York offices — some of the partners in almost all the major firms — and most of the architects in the public sector. For the architectural profession in this city, it would be a tragedy to lose it. We’re not out of the woods yet. The School of Architecture and the other arts programs at City College have borne large shares of the cuts. Our adjunct budget has been drastically cut back. That means that a lot of young architects, most of the women and minorities, lose their outlets for teaching, opportunities to inspire the young, and the school loses the dynamic cross-fertilization between the older and younger faculty.”

**Carmi Bee teaches architecture at City College and practices architecture with RKTB Architects.**

“It already seems as if the cuts have had an effect. Last semester, when they were talking about closing the school, I was teaching a particularly good class, and the students all panicked. They wanted to go to summer school, but the courses they needed were not being offered. It was a very diverse class, typical of City College, about one-third Asian, one-third from Eastern Europe,

and one-third black. The students had come from various places, not fresh out of high school. One had studied medicine, one had studied art, one had studied architecture at Pratt. They knew what they wanted to do. Most of them hoped to go to graduate school. They all needed advice about how to proceed, and no one could give it to them, so a lot of them ended up transferring to other schools. Some may not be able to continue, because they work and commute. City College was accessible for them as it was accessible to me when I was a student there.”

**Yolande Daniels graduated from City College and earned an M.Arch. at Columbia. She worked for Smith-Miller + Hawkinson and for Anabelle Seldorf before opening her firm.**

“The school has a couple of potent problems. One is a lot of tenured professors. The school has prospered largely because of the adjuncts and junior faculty — and in spite of the senior faculty, though there are clear exceptions. Many City College students have extraordinary responsibilities. They could have dropped out of the educational process at any point. They are extremely motivated, but their experience tends to be narrow, and a lot of the senior faculty does not recognize how to broaden that experience by exploring ideas in architecture. The school has an extraordinary number of women students, from immigrant and minority backgrounds, and the tenured faculty is mostly white guys. They don’t see that these kids can operate at any level in the profession. On the one hand they are talking about the sanctity of the school, and on the other, they are protecting their \$80,000 sinecures.

“The other problem is that the school is up for an accreditation review, and it is not clear it can survive one now.”

**Craig Barton, AIA, a former junior member of the City College faculty, practices architecture in New York.**

“The cuts have really destabilized the school from the point of view of the students who feel that if they come, they may not be able to complete their programs. The enrollment is a little bit down. Of course the tuition has gone up too. There is a real possibility that the only school that is really affordable will disappear. The other big problem is the way the cuts have been made. Essentially, the junior faculty has been let go. The school has relied heavily on adjuncts who are really the life and blood of the school.

“What this communicates is that the CUNY system is not committed to minorities — or to the arts. When we are compared to other departments, we are not going to look good. You can’t have a studio with 150 people. The battle the school of architecture has to wage is that we cannot be looked at in the same way. People here are going to have to think about how to raise money since the state is not going to. Hopefully, the cuts will encourage the school to think in a more creative way. Creativity doesn’t have to be applied only to design.”

**Ghislaine Hermanuz teaches architecture at City College and directs the Technical Assistance Center, which does research and projects with community groups.**

**AIA President's Award Given to Philip Johnson**

by *Kira Gould*

**H**e's the most well-known, most outrageous, and most-quoted architect of this century. Next month, at the Heritage Ball, the Chapter will honor Philip Johnson, FAIA, with the President's Award.

"A chameleon," as he has described himself? Undeniably. But at the heart of his commitment to constant change is a willingness to learn from younger architects. This humility is a characteristic famously absent from the psyches of many in the profession.

Johnson has always stood for architecture with an aesthetic refinement — something of a rarity in a country where real beauty is not a popular cause. "That's why we use it," Johnson says. "And that's a good reputation to have. It keeps me from work I don't want to do."

Whatever one might think of his body of work, Johnson has done something for the profession that no other architect has. He has repeatedly made architecture front-page news. In a culture that continues to underappreciate the art of architecture, the visibility Johnson's projects routinely bring to the profession is invaluable. Johnson, who says he wants to leave behind "things with some elements of beauty in them," is not terribly worried about the current political turn against the arts. "They may cut down the NEA for a few years, but there's already a reaction against that."

Of his current work, Johnson speaks fondly about the new visitors' pavilion on the grounds of his famous Glass House in New Canaan, Connecticut. He calls it "a building that you feel might

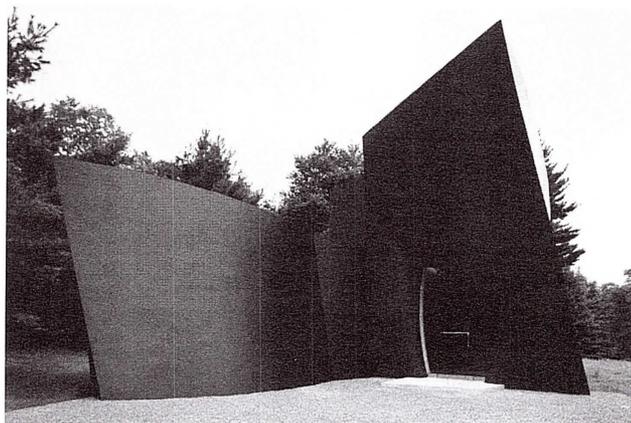
talk to you, might snap at you, or at least object to what you are doing. But it has life, I suppose, because of the forms."

He's also pleased with a commission for a new Protestant church, in Dallas. "It's a fast-growing church, and they want to express a new spirituality," he says. "They've given me a wonderful free hand."

He has not had such freedom in his work for Donald Trump on the Riverside South project, which Johnson calls a "unique and sobering experience." But some aspects of working with Trump have been rewarding, as he told Hilary Lewis and John O'Connor in last year's book, *Philip Johnson: The Architect in His Own Words*. Of the deal-making developer, Johnson said, "He's as crazy as I am. He insisted on balconies, and I said, 'I think balconies are awful.' And he said: 'Buzz, balconies are out. We're not having any balconies in these buildings.' At just that speed. Delicious."

At Disney's new Florida town, Celebration, under the guidance of his longtime friend, Bob Stern, and Jaquelin Robertson, FAIA, Johnson is working on a town hall, which he calls "abstract, but very conservative."

With a light note of regret that seems slightly out of place in this man of rapid-fire speech whose thought patterns zig-zag neatly from subject to subject, Johnson mentions work he hasn't done. "I'd like to do prisons and airports, but nobody's asked me," he says, then brushes it off: "So what, I missed a few things." Having practiced during the evolution, glory, and demise of several architectural movements, Johnson hasn't missed much.



Michael Moran

*Visitors' pavilion in New Canaan, Philip Johnson*

**Heritage Ball**

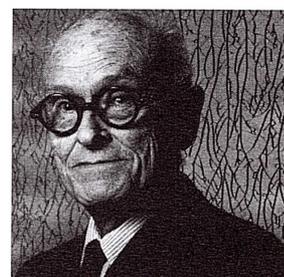
This year the annual dinner dance will take place on November 13 at the University Club at 1 West 54th Street. Proceeds of the event will benefit the public outreach programs and the Learning By Design: AIA New York Chapter Committee. To order tickets call the Chapter at 683-0023, ext. 21.

**Cesar Pelli Lecture**

On Wednesday, October 25, at 6:00 pm, the AIA New York Chapter will sponsor a lecture by Cesar Pelli, FAIA, this year's AIA National Gold Medal Award Winner. Pelli's lecture, entitled "Buildings and Thoughts," will focus on recent projects. The lecture will be hosted by the National Design Museum at 2 East 91st Street. The cost is \$15 for members, \$10 for students, and \$20 for nonmembers. For more information please contact the Chapter at 683-0023, ext. 17.

**SRO Housing Here and Now**

On Tuesday, October 17, at 6:00 pm, at the AIA Chapter office, the Housing Committee will sponsor a panel discussion to explore the state of SRO housing in the city and possible changes for regulations. The cost is \$5 for members, and \$10 for nonmembers. RSVP to the Chapter at 683-0023, ext. 21.



Luca Vignelli

Johnson's good friend Peter Eisenman, FAIA, has been quoted in the past as saying that the elder statesman of architecture is the most powerful architect since Bernini, a statement he says "is still true."

Asked for words to describe his friend Johnson, Richard Meier, FAIA, came up with several: "astute, articulate, brilliant, generous, personable, perspicacious, outrageous, perceptive, and vivacious. And in his work, his writings, his talks, and even in casual conversation, Johnson is all those things."



Peter Aaroni/Esto

Standing left to right:  
Frederick Bland, Richard Blinder,  
Jack Beyer, John Belle,  
Richard Southwick

**AIA National's 1995 Firm Award Goes to New York's Beyer Blinder Belle**

by Kira Gould

**A** belief in the layers of urbanism and history and in an ethic of collaboration drives the achievements of New York's Beyer Blinder Belle Architects and Planners, the firm that this year earned the AIA's Firm Award. National recognition for the 80-member firm is well-deserved, but in New York the results of its 26-year practice are evident around every corner — the South Street Seaport's museum block, the award-winning Ellis Island Museum of Immigration, the ongoing rehabilitation of the Williamsburg Bridge, and the Grand Central Terminal restoration to name only a few.

Founded in 1968 by **John Belle**, FAIA, **John H. Beyer**, FAIA, and **Richard L. Blinder**, FAIA, in part as a response to what they saw as the degeneration of the urban environment during the 1950s and 1960s, the firm worked for housing and community planning groups in its early years and contributed to the rebirth of neighborhoods in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Manhattan. **Frederick Bland**, FAIA, joined the firm in 1978, expanding the practice's new building and urban design efforts. Preservation leader **James Marston Fitch**, Hon. AIA, joined the firm in 1980 as chairperson of historic preservation. Fitch, author of several key books on preservation and the founder of the graduate programs in historic preservation at both Columbia University and the University of Pennsylvania, brought with him (and still contributes daily) "a level of erudition that few architects have an opportunity to benefit from in their practices," said Beyer. In 1993, **Richard Southwick**, AIA, became

the sixth partner, bringing commercial and institutional expertise to the team.

While the firm's work embodies a deep and abiding respect for the past, the designers are committed to creative contemporary interpretation. "When there's value, then there's reason to restore," Beyer said. "Renovated buildings tend to take on a contemporary look and layout, even if the exterior is restored." This attitude has served the firm well over time. Beyer explained that each project requires a value judgment, which can be tricky in additions. "Sometimes a highly contemporary addition might be most satisfactory, where something too sympathetic and contextual would be contrived. Replication is wrong, unless you're talking about a necessary piece of a building, such as a portion of a cornice."

That understanding of the mixture of past and present — so crucial especially in dense urban settings — informs their work. The firm is currently working on the restoration of Paul Rudolph's Art and Architecture Building at Yale, the Center for Jewish History, and the Myrtle Avenue Subway Station rehabilitation in New York, among other projects.

According to the jury, headed by Cesar Pelli, FAIA, "The firm has demonstrated a remarkable consistency of design quality for over 25 years. At that time the firm was in the vanguard of preservation in America, and it has retained that passion and concern for the appropriate custodianship of our urban fabric. The firm richly deserves recognition for incorporating vital new uses for our landmark structures."

**Beyond Borders**

by Kira Gould

**A**rchitectural practice in other countries can be a rewarding and profitable venture (see "Exporting Architecture," pp. 10–15). But with the benefits come problems, ranging from language barriers to overlapping tax laws and convoluted contract provisions. As that global market grows, finding and sharing information about construction beyond the U.S. border becomes increasingly important.

In many chapters around the country, and at AIA National, committees bring together those working outside the country and those who want to practice elsewhere. Russell Keune, FAIA, director of international relations for AIA National and director of the international markets and practice Professional Interest Area, says his PIA is organized into three subcommittees — markets, practice, and government affairs and trade. Among other activities and services, the group is hosting a conference called "Building Globally" next month with the World Trade Center and the Boston Society of Architects.

In San Francisco, a fast-growing committee gave special attention to practice in China, Vietnam, and Japan, and has a lunch program for presentations by people engaged in international practice. AIA Atlanta and AIA Georgia teamed up with the Georgia Department of Trade, Tourism, and Industry to produce a guide to Georgia architects and consultants (in four languages) for visiting foreign companies. The Portland Chapter works with the city Port Authority; when trade delegations visit, local AIA members already have a connection. Chapters from cities near the

*continued on page 20*



Brian Rose

South Street Seaport museum block



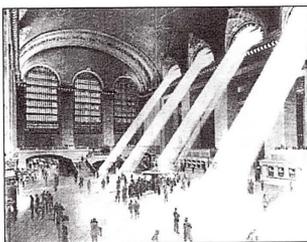
Peter Aaroni/Esto

Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration



Kevin Woest

Williamsburg Bridge rehabilitation



Peter Felio, Inc.

Grand Central Terminal restoration



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**October 15**

Entry deadline for the Design of the Perfect Chair for Barbie competition sponsored by *Metropolis* magazine and the Vitra Design Museum. Contact *Metropolis* magazine, Barbie, 177 E. 87th St., New York, NY 10128, 722-5546.

**October 18**

Entry deadline for the New York Foundation for the Arts fellowships for working artists, including architects and digital artists. Contact the New York Foundation for the Arts, 155 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-1507, 366-6900.

**October 27**

Entry deadline for Canstruction '95, to benefit the hungry and homeless in New York City. Contact Canstruction at 759-7008 for an entry form and more information.

**October 27**

Entry deadline for submissions to the Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute's thirteenth biennial design awards. Contact CRSI Design Awards, 933 N. Plum Grove Rd., Schaumburg, IL 60173-4758, 708-517-1200.

**October 31**

Deadline for inclusion in the confidential 1995 Lewis List of engineering and architecture firms seeking to buy, sell, or merge. Contact Brian J. Lewis, 4220 Morningstar Dr., Castle Rock, CO 80104, 303-660-8868.

**November 6**

Entry deadline for the United States Institute for Theater Technology's annual architecture awards program. Contact Tim Hartung, Architecture Commission, USITT, 10 W. 19th St., Suite 5A, New York, NY 10011-4206, 807-7171.

**November 15**

Entry deadline for the American Academy in Rome's 100th annual Rome Prize fellowship for independent study and advanced research in the fine arts and humanities. Contact the Fellowships Department, American Academy in Rome, 7 E. 60th St., New York, NY 10022-1001, 751-7200.

October 2, 6:00 pm

Public Architects

October 3, 6:00 pm

Historic Buildings

October 5, 8:30 am

Professional Practice

October 5, 6:00 pm

Marketing and Public Relations

October 10, 8:00 am

Architecture for Justice

October 10, 6:00 pm

Computer Applications  
at Rafael Vinoly Architects

October 12, 6:00 pm

Minority Resources

October 16, 6:30 pm

Learning By Design

October 18, 12:30 pm

Architecture for Education

October 18, 5:30 pm

Foreign Visitors

October 19, 6:00 pm

Building Codes

October 25, 6:00 am

Women in Architecture

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

## Abraham Geller Remembered

by Peter Samton

**A**braham W. Geller, architect, winner of the New York Chapter AIA Medal of Honor ten years ago, died at Beth Israel Hospital on August 14 of pancreatic cancer.

Abe was that rarity among architects: a social conscience to the profession, a mentor to numerous aspiring designers, a champion for the inclusion of art in architecture, and an avid supporter of struggling artists. His office was a launching pad for young architects interested in across-the-board experience, from responsibility in conceptual design to follow-through with the most minute details. Aldo Giurgola, one of his early protégés, recalled Abe for “his wonderful energy and enthusiasm about architecture and his generosity as an artist who stimulated so many architects in their work.”

Born in Romania in 1912, Geller arrived in the United States in 1920. He studied at Cornell and worked for William Lescaze, Shreve Lamb & Harmon, Walter Gropius, and Marcel Breuer before forming an office with George Nemeny in 1946 and establishing his own firm in 1950.

He gained early recognition for his design of Al and Dick’s Steak House on 54th Street with interior rubble stone walls à la Breuer and a magnificently simple cantilevered canopy. His office was responsible for a variety of cutting-edge projects such as Cinema I and II on Third Avenue, one of the first multiplex theaters in the country, the residential pavilion for the Henry Ittleson Center for Child Research in Riverdale, and Aaron David Hall, a performing arts complex for City College, which *The New York*

*Times* architecture critic, Paul Goldberger, called a “piece of architecture for performing arts that puts Lincoln Center to shame.”

An unreconstructed modernist, Geller was known to refuse commissions where, for example, the Colonial style was demanded. When he accepted the chapter’s Medal of Honor in 1985, Geller veered from the typical thank-you speech to blast the Whitney Museum and its architect, Michael Graves, for a proposed postmodern addition that was “the antithesis of the philosophy of the museum’s originator, Marcel Breuer.”

Although known among many young New York architects as a true architect’s architect, Geller was one of the most enthusiastic supporters of aspiring artists including Jose de Rivera, Roy Gussow, Jan Yoors, Ilya Bolotowsky, Max Spivak, and Ann Gillen. Art had a prominent place in all his work.

In recent years Geller cut a familiar figure with a wide-brimmed black felt hat (his fee for the design of a small haberdashery store) along with thick-rimmed black glasses. His manner was humble, but when it came to the underpinnings of modern architecture and the collaborative effort required, his convictions were great. They have left their mark on many of us.

Abe Geller is survived by his wife, Marion, his daughters Amy and Janice, a brother, Dr. Lee Geller, and two grandchildren.

*Peter Samton, FAIA, is partner at Gruzen Samton in New York.*

continued from page 18

Mexican border explore the implications of NAFTA passage on architects.

“These programs started so people could share resources,” Keune said. “And the entrepreneurial among them have been successful in reaching out to all kinds of organizations. Canada has its largest foreign consulate in Atlanta, and the local chapter is very tied in with them.” More than just an information source, active committees can become the conduit — ultimately both helpful and profitable — to a wide range of city and state groups. For information about PIA or the conference in Boston, call the PIA information line at 202-626-7482.

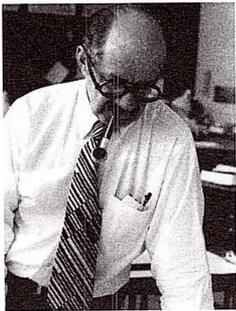
### Chapter News

**Platt, Wyckoff & Coles**, founded in 1897 by Charles Platt, has announced that Ferdinand L. Wyckoff, Jr., AIA (emeritus), is retiring. The renamed successor firm, **Page Ayres Cowley Architects, LLP**, will be headed by Page Ayres Cowley, AIA, RIBA, and Scott Duenow, AIA. Kenneth D. Coles, AIA, RIBA, will remain as project director.

**Paul Heyer**, AIA, RIBA, president of the New York School of Interior Design, will be the keynote speaker at the twenty-fourth Colombian National Congress of Architects, to be held October 12–14 on the island of San Andres.

### Exploring the Sacred to Find New Forms of Architecture

The Architecture Dialogue Committee has invited author Anthony Lawlor, AIA, to discuss his book, *The Temple in the House: Finding the Sacred in Everyday Architecture*. The lecture will be held on Thursday, October 12, at 6:00 pm, at 200 Lexington Avenue on the sixteenth floor. The cost is \$5 for members and \$10 for non-members. RSVP to the Chapter at 683-0023, ext. 21.



Abeir Symans

Abraham Geller

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**CONTINUING  
EXHIBITIONS**

**American Relief Sculpture.** *The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave. 535-7710. Closes October 16.*

**A Perspectivist Salon.** *The Gallery of the New York School of Interior Design, 170 E. 70th St. 472-1500. Closes October 17.*

**Adjusting Foundation: The Work of John Hejduk.** *Cooper Union Haughton Gallery, 7th St. at Third Ave. 353-4220. Closes October 19.*

**Antonio Muntadas – New York City Museum.** *Storefront for Art and Architecture, 97 Kenmare St. 431-5795. Closes October 21.*

**Michael V. David: The City at Night.** *Michael Ingbar Gallery of Art, 568 Broadway. 334-1100. Closes October 28.*

**The Weibenhofsiedlung: Experimental Housing Built for the Deutscher Werkbund, Stuttgart, 1927.** *Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, Avery Hall, 100 and 400 levels. 854-3473. Closes October 29.*

**Modern Glass in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.** *The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave. 535-7710. Closes October 29.*

**Reiser + Umemoto.** *Columbia University GSAPP, South Gallery, Buell Hall. 854-3473. Closes November 4.*

**The Renaissance in France: Drawings from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris.** *The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave. 535-7710. Closes November 12.*

**Beyond the Box: Exploring Urban Design of Superstores.** *The Municipal Art Society, Urban Center Galleries, 457 Madison Avenue. 935-3960. Closes November 17.*

**Perspectives on the Manhattan Civic Center.** *The Municipal Art Society, Urban Center Galleries, 457 Madison Ave. 935-3960. Closes December 2.*

**Robert Moses and the Shaping of New York.** *The Paine Webber Gallery, 1285 Ave. of the Americas. 713-2885. Closes December 8.*

**The Architecture of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1870-1995.** *The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave. 535-7710. Closes January 7.*

**A New England Wooden Synagogue: Building Temple Israel, Greenfield, MA.** *The Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave. 423-3271. Closes January 14.*

**Piet Mondrian: 1872-1944.** *The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. 708-9400. Closes January 23.*

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*continued from page 20*

**Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Arbitration but Were Afraid to Ask**

On Tuesday, October 24, at 6:00 pm, at the Chapter office, C. Jay Berger, attorney at law, will lead a panel discussion about architects and the arbitration process. Other panelists include Florence Peterson, vice president of the Arbitration Association of America, and architect and arbitrator Michael Altschuler. The cost is \$5 for members and \$10 for nonmembers. RSVP to the Chapter at 683-0023, ext. 21.

**Canstruction '95**

The deadline for entries is October 27. Entries are limited to the first 30 projects received. Don't miss this opportunity to help your community and tackle problems of hunger and homelessness in an ingenious and fun way. On November 8, Canstruction construction will take place from 4:00 to 10:00 pm at the D & D Building, 979 Third Avenue, with the judging, press review, and the gala cocktail reception the following day. If you missed your entry form in last month's *Oculus*, please call Canstruction at 759-7008.

**Arnold W. Brunner Grant**

The AIA New York Chapter invites submissions of proposals for a \$15,000 grant for advanced study in an area of architectural investigation that will effectively contribute to the knowledge, teaching, or practice of the art and science of architecture. The proposed investigation must result in a final written work, design project, research paper, or other form of presentation. Applications are available at the Chapter office at 200 Lexington Avenue, on the sixteenth floor. Proposals may be submitted until 5:00 pm on November 17.

**Haskell Awards for Student Architectural Journalism**

The Douglas Haskell Awards were founded to encourage fine writing on architecture and design, and to foster regard for intelligent criticism among future professionals. Students must be enrolled in a professional architecture or related program. Submissions are limited to articles on architecture, urban design, or related topics published from 1993 through 1995, unpublished works scheduled for publications in 1995, and student-edited journals released in 1994 or 1995. The deadline for submissions is November 1 by 5:00 pm. For more information, please call the Chapter at 683-0023, ext. 17.

**Rizzoli Bookstores' Top 10**

*As of August 15, 1995*

1. **House of the Architect**, Anaxtu Zabalbeascoa (Rizzoli, cloth, \$50.00).
2. **The New American House**, Oscar Rie Ojeda (Watson/Guption, cloth, \$55.00).
3. **New York Guide to the Metropolis, 2nd Edition**, Gerard Wolfe (McGraw-Hill, paper, \$19.95).
4. **Mexican Houses of the Pacific**, Marie Colle (Alti, cloth, \$55.00).
5. **Elegant Hotels of Europe**, Wendy Black (PBC, cloth, \$29.95).
6. **Formal Design in Renaissance Art**, Michele Furnari (Rizzoli, cloth, \$30.00).
7. **Architecture of a Jumping Universe**, Charles Jencks (Academy Editions, paper, \$30.00).
8. **Modern House**, John Welsh (Phaidon, cloth, \$69.95).
9. **The Georgian House in Britain and America**, Steve Parissien (Rizzoli, cloth, \$60.00).
10. **Arts and Crafts Architecture**, Peter Davey (Phaidon, cloth, \$60.00).

**Urban Center Books' Top 10**

*As of August 15, 1995*

1. **Kiasma: Working Process**, Steven Holl Architects (Steven Holl, paper, \$6.50).
2. **Architecture of a Jumping Universe**, Charles Jencks (Academy Editions, paper, \$30.00).
3. **Historical Building Construction**, Donald Friedman (Norton, cloth, \$48.00).
4. **Power of Place**, Dolores Hayden (MIT Press, cloth, \$30.00).
5. **House of the Architect**, Anaxtu Zabalbeascoa (Rizzoli, cloth, \$50.00).
6. **Architecture of Good Intentions**, Colin Rowe (Academy Editions, paper, \$35.00).
7. **Richard Meier**, Philip Jodidio (Taschen, paper, \$24.99).
8. **Modern House**, John Welsh (Phaidon, cloth, \$69.95).
9. **Flesh: Architectural Probes**, Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio (Princeton Architectural Press, paper, \$34.95).
10. **Asymptote: Architecture at the Interval**, Hani Rashid and Lise Couture (Rizzoli, paper, \$30.00).

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October

**1**

Sunday

**Tour: Community Gardens**

Given by Patricia Olmstead. Sponsored by the Municipal Art Society. 1:00 pm. Advance registration, 935-3960. \$30.

**2**

Monday

**Exhibition: The Fine Art of Seeing, 40 Years of Design Solutions**

Visual Art Museum, 209 E. 23 St. 679-7350. Closes October 20.

**Exhibition:**

**Untitled Reiser + Umemoto Exhibition**  
Columbia University GSAPP, Buell Hall, south gallery. 854-3473. Closes November 4.

**3**

Tuesday

**Exhibition: The Concept Plan for the Hudson River Park**

The Municipal Art Society, Urban Center Galleries, 457 Madison Ave. 935-3960. Closes December 2.

**4**

Wednesday

**Lecture: Hyper-Tension**

Given by Odile Decq. Sponsored by Columbia University GSAPP. 6:30 pm. Wood Auditorium, Avery Hall. 854-3473.

**5**

Thursday

**Lecture: John Pawson, Current Work**

Given by John Pawson. Sponsored by the Architectural League. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 753-1722. \$7.

**Lecture: The Fine Art of Seeing, 40 Years of Design Solutions**

Given by Ivan Chermayeff. Sponsored by the School of Visual Arts. 7:00 pm. Visual Art Museum, 209 E. 23 St. 679-7350.

**10**

Tuesday

**Course: Westward Expansion, The Upper West Side, 1879 to 1914 – The Emergence of Distinct Residential and Commercial Building Types**

Given by John Kriskiewicz. Sponsored by Landmark West! and the Bard Graduate Center. 6:30 pm. 18 W. 86th St. Advance registration, 501-3013. \$150 (includes four lectures and walking tour).

**11**

Wednesday

**Lecture: Death in America**

Given by Hal Foster. Sponsored by the Columbia University GSAPP. 6:30 pm. Wood Auditorium, Avery Hall. 854-3473.

**12**

Thursday

**Lecture: Current Work, From Kyoto to Barcelona and Back**

Given by Leslie Robertson. Sponsored by the Architectural League. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 753-1722. \$7.

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT**

**Panel: Recycling Excess Health Facilities, Challenges and Opportunities**

Sponsored by the Health Facilities Committee. 8:30 am. St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center, Seventh Ave. and W. 11th St. Call Jeannie Bochette, 382-8824. \$5 (\$10 nonmembers, includes breakfast).

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT**

**Lecture: Soul and the Cutting Edge**

Given by Anthony Lawlor. Sponsored by the Architecture Dialogue Committee. 6:00 pm. 200 Lexington Ave., sixteenth floor. 683-0023, ext. 11. \$5 (\$10 nonmembers, includes refreshments).

**13**

Friday

**Exhibition: Beyond the Box**

The Municipal Art Society, Urban Center Galleries, 457 Madison Ave. 935-3960. Closes November 17.

**16**

Monday

**Lecture: Alien Art**

Given by Krzysztof Wodiczko. Sponsored by the Parsons School of Design Architecture & Environmental Design Department. 6:30 pm. Room 206, 25 East 13th Street. 229-8955.

**17**

Tuesday

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT**

**Panel: SRO Housing, Here and Now**

Given by Willa Appel and Richard Ravitch. Sponsored by the Housing Committee. 6:00 pm. 200 Lexington Ave., sixteenth floor. RSVP 683-0023, ext. 21. \$5 (\$10 nonmembers).

**Lecture: Peter Eisenman, FAIA**

Sponsored by Urban Center Books. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. RSVP 935-3595

**20**

Friday

**Exhibition: Manhattan Civic Center**

The Municipal Art Society, Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 935-3960. Closes December 2.

**21**

Saturday

**Seminar: The Ornament of Classical Architecture, A Seminar for the Modern Designer, Builder, and Patron**

Sponsored by the Institute for the Study of Classical Architecture and *Traditional Building* magazine. RSVP 570-7374 or 718-636-0788. \$175 (\$95 for one day, includes lectures, workshops, and walking tours). Continues on Sunday.

**22**

Sunday

**Tour: Stained Glass on the Upper West Side**

Given by Michael Levine. Sponsored by Landmark West! 12:30 pm. 496-8110.

**24**

Tuesday

**Workshop/Symposium:**

**Beyond the Box and Related Issues**

Sponsored by the Municipal Art Society. 6:00 pm. Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. Call Ann Kaufman Webster, 932-8570.

**25**

Wednesday

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT**

**Lecture: Buildings and Thoughts**

Given by Cesar Pelli. Cosponsored by the Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum. 6:00 pm. 2 E. 91 St. RSVP 683-0023, ext. 21. Reception to follow.

**Lecture: Indigestion**

Given by Elizabeth Diller and Richard Scofidio. Sponsored by Columbia University GSAPP. 6:30 pm. Wood Auditorium, Avery Hall. 854-3473.

**Lecture: Charles Gwathmey, FAIA**

Sponsored by Urban Center Books. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. RSVP 935-3595.

**26**

Thursday

**Tour: On Broadway, A Journey Uptown Over Time**

Given by David Dunlap. Sponsored by Landmark West!. 6:00 pm. Museum of American Folk Art, 2 Lincoln Sq. 496-8110.

**Lecture: Agrest and**

**Gandelsonas, Current Work**

Given by Diana Agrest and Mario Gandelsonas. Sponsored by the Architectural League. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 753-1722. \$7.

**Panel: The Changing Environments in Health Care Facilities**

Sponsored by the International Facility Managers Association Greater New York Chapter. 6:00 pm. Planned Parenthood Offices, 26 Bleecker St. 807-0400. Free.

**Lecture: Richard Meier, FAIA**

Sponsored by Urban Center Books. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. RSVP 935-3595.

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