

# OCULUS

5

Steven Holl at the  
Architectural League

8

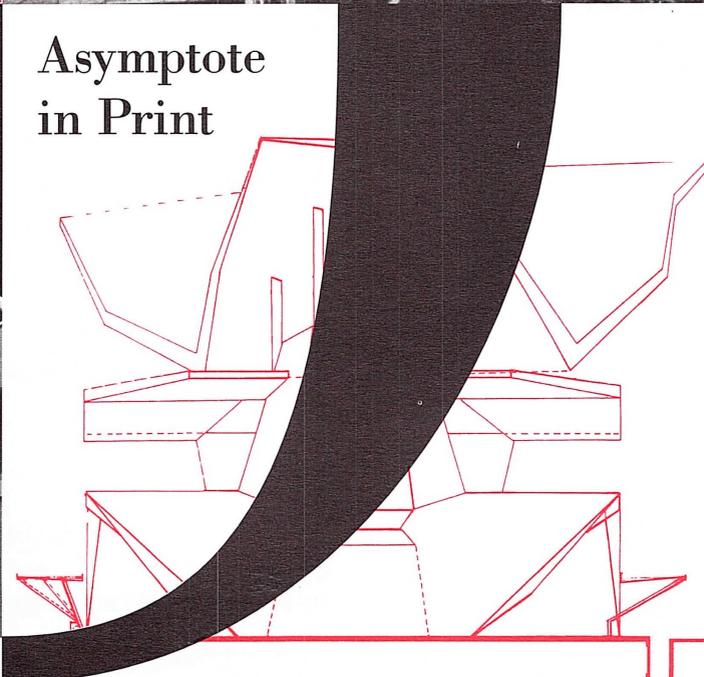
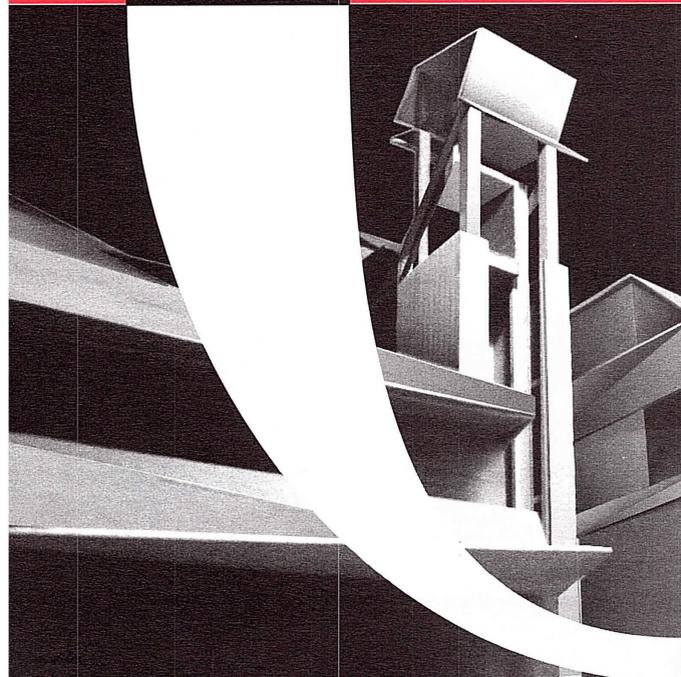
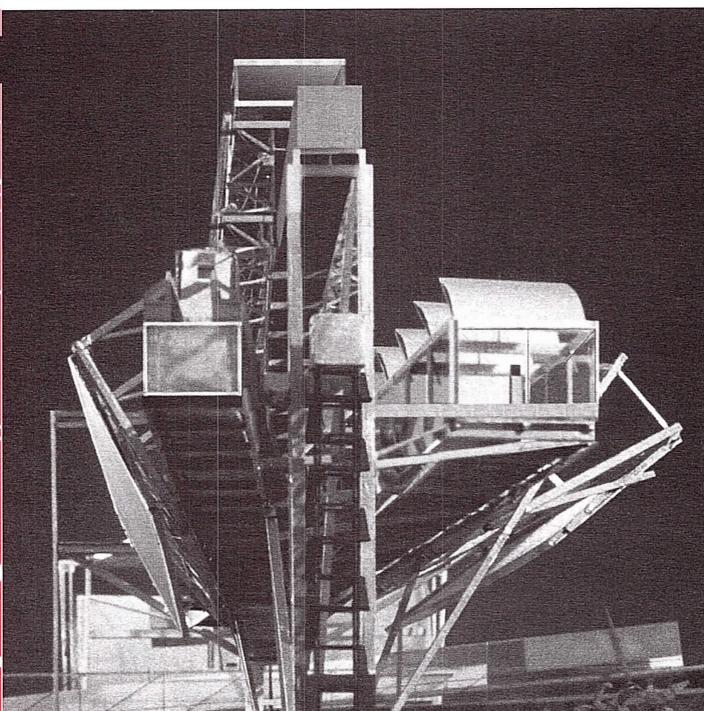
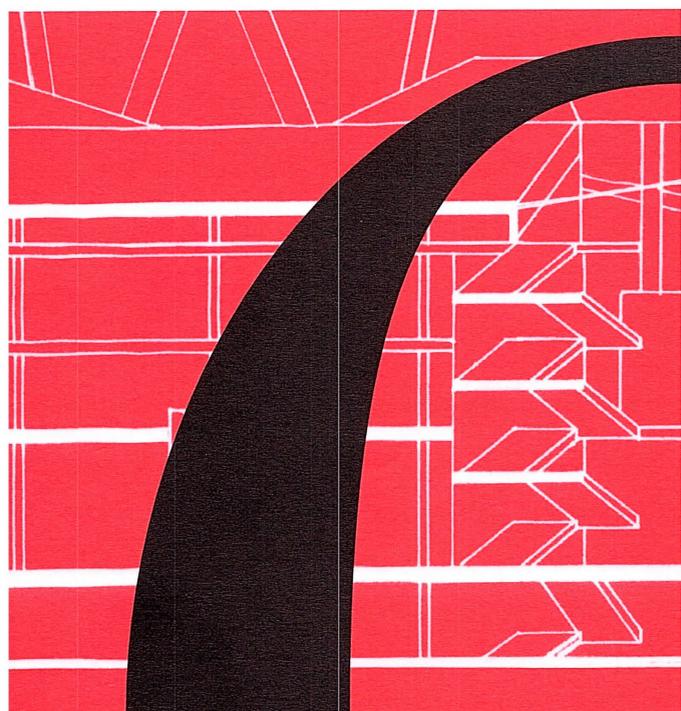
Michael Hopkins  
at the National  
Academy of Design

10

Light Construction  
at MoMA

13

Greg Lynn at  
Artists Space



Asymptote  
in Print

**Volume 58, Number 3, November 1995**

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# News

from the Chapter president, Marilyn Jordan Taylor. November arrives, and with it nearly the end of the year in which I have had the privilege of serving as the Chapter's president. We have

accomplished many of the tasks the Board and I planned, though of course not all of them; some will soon be turned over to Jerry A. Davis, FAIA, and then to Robert Geddes, FAIA, after him.

I welcome their ongoing leadership.

One success we can certainly claim is the strengthening of our public voice. Through Carol Clark's superb initiative, the inaugural season of the George S. Lewis public policy sessions brought architects, public officials, and community members together for discussions of major issues facing the city: the future of Lower Manhattan, the city's changing retail policy, and the threats to capital budgets at city, state, and national levels. The sessions continue this winter with a look at the emerging retail and entertainment industry on December 14 (8:30 am at 200 Lexington). Don't miss them!

On the Washington front, the AIA New York Chapter met with many members of Congress and their staffs to protest the 25 percent cut to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) budget. This reduction will be devastating both to owners and residents of assisted housing and to the neighborhoods where the housing is located. Further cuts in affordable housing could precipitate a crisis reminiscent of the dismal conditions of the Great Depression. Given the political climate and the drastic reduction in funds, Mark Ginsberg, AIA, Herbert Oppenheimer, FAIA, and Frank Lang, AIA, together with Jim Martino, AIA, president of Long Island Chapter, and Al Eisenberg, director of government affairs for AIA National, told Congressional representatives that we are concerned that good programs and projects will fail due to the rash actions of Congress. Although it is unlikely that much funding will be restored this year, our efforts and those of others may in the short term slow and modify some of the untested and potentially destructive policy changes that accompany these cuts. In the longer term, we may help to increase and improve federal support of affordable housing.

It has become clear that to have influence on such issues as the future of the low-income housing tax credits, HUD, and the National Endowment for the Arts, we here in the AIA New York Chapter as well as our colleagues across the country must become even more vocal. This need to get involved is equally important here in our city, where landmark designation hearings, rezoning proposals, and capital budgets continue to set the framework in which we all live and practice as architects. Help the Chapter speak up and be heard!

Finally, November 13 brings the Chapter's annual Heritage Ball. This year we have the privilege of honoring a remarkable gentleman and singular architect, Philip Johnson, FAIA. I look forward to being together with you to toast his extraordinary accomplishments and contributions.

**Whitney Museum Expansion**

In a somewhat ironic twist of fate, Marcel Breuer's Whitney Museum was saved not because of its modernism but out of respect for the past. Whitney trustee Leonard A. Lauder called the respectful plan by **Richard Gluckman Architects** to turn museum offices into galleries and nearby town houses into offices "a solution of the nineties which is an entirely different approach than other institutions have taken...one that involves the recycling of older spaces and the restoration of older buildings."

The museum's ill-fated attempt, ten years ago, to replace the town houses next door and upstage the Breuer building with a bigger post-modern addition by Michael Graves was actually more modern in its attempt to sweep away what had gone before and begin again. It was also typical of the eighties — brash, costly, and confident. Graves's expansion was to have cost \$37.5 million.

The new \$14 million plan, announced in September, will be almost imperceptible, like the remodeling of the Whitney lobby Gluckman Architects did last year, removing later accretions and restoring the spirit of the original.

Exhibition space will increase by a third, so the museum can display the pre-World War II collection, the Calder Circus, photographs, prints, and drawings from the permanent collection for the first time in new galleries on the fourth and fifth floors. Administrative offices there and in seven other separate locations will be combined in a group of town houses on 74th Street. The stoop of a grand brownstone at 31 East 74th Street will be replaced, a service building

containing elevators, and other common facilities will be built in the back yard. Existing apartments in the brownstone and a handsome Georgian house next door will be converted to offices, an expanded research library, and lecture and conference rooms.

**Riverdale Jewish Center**

**Voorsanger & Associates Architects** is designing a new sanctuary and addition to the Riverdale Jewish Center, an orthodox Jewish synagogue for a congregation of 550 families at Independence Avenue and 237th Street in the Bronx. The 21,000-square-foot addition will contain seating for 750 people, a new entry terrace, and a lobby, as well as classrooms and meeting areas that will double the size of the present facility built in 1952. The architects are using direct light and transparency in the sanctuary, which will be organized on two levels with separate seating for men and women facing an ark oriented to the east.

The goal of the renovation, which will take place in two phases, is to provide for anticipated growth while meeting the spiritual and practical needs of the congregation. Building systems will be improved or replaced, and the existing center will be brought into compliance with ADA requirements. Completion is anticipated for the summer of 1997.

**Olympic Image**

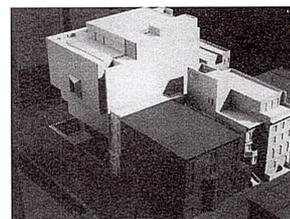
If you like what you see next summer at the Olympics, you can thank a local firm for its part. **FTL/HAPPOLD** is one of four consultants, including Hirthler Graphic Designers, MSTSD Architects, and Roy Ashley & Associates Landscape Architects, chosen by the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games to design the "look of the games." Much of the firm's effort has gone into

work on a kit of parts, approximately 40 large-scale, temporary structures that will be spread through four neighboring counties to create a coherent visual identity and help orient the expected hundreds of thousands of visitors.

FTL/Happold is collaborating on the design of the structures, which will incorporate scaffolding, fabric panels, tensile structures, and concrete ballasting, and is also responsible for structural engineering, construction documents, and full-size prototypes of individual elements. FTL/Happold is also project architect and engineer for Centennial Olympic Park and consulting structural engineer to MSTSD Architects for its design of three 120-foot-high towers to support tensile structures and large banners.

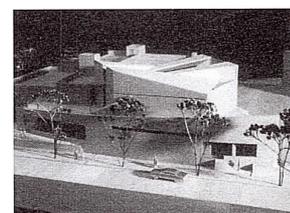
**Puerto Rican Federal Offices**

Local Puerto Rican community groups will have the use of new facilities when the government of Puerto Rico's Federal Affairs Administration moves to new office space on the thirty-third floor of 3 Park Avenue. The firm of **M. Castedo Architect, P.C.**, is the architect. In addition to executive and administrative offices, the program calls for reception and waiting areas that can be used as gallery space, and multifunction rooms for economic and educational development, including small business seminars and job placement programs. Schematic design began in late September. According to project architect Kimberly Eckland, the design will incorporate materials, finishes, and colors evocative of Puerto Rico.



Michael Moran

*Model,  
Whitney Museum of American Art,  
Richard Gluckman Architects*



*Riverdale Jewish Center,  
Voorsanger & Associates*



*"The look of the games,"  
FTL Architects*

**New York Mercantile Exchange Building**

While groundbreaking for the New York Mercantile Exchange Building September 19 marked a victory for the city, the state, and the architects, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill of New York, the ceremonies at Battery Park City demonstrated too clearly how little regard the rest of the world has for our profession and the work we do. The governor, presidents of the Mercantile Exchange and Battery Park City Authority, a representative of the Mayor's office, numerous city officials, and business leaders talked about how New York is the financial capital of the nation and the world. But no one so much as mentioned the shiny, gridded, contextual building about to rise on the dramatic site.

Its west facade, covered with polished granite, tinted glass, and a metal supergrid, will curve along the Hudson River shoreline on the last available commercial waterfront site at the Battery Park City. Other rectangular patterned facades will line the straight streets of the extended city grid in the area. And a setback from the 15-story structure at the tenth floor will mediate between a lower mass of housing and nearby skyscrapers. Street-level storefronts with bright silver and aluminum mullions and clear glazing will lead to a two-story interior arcade along the esplanade. A big window on the south, piercing a small-scale grid, will overlook the yacht cove and a new North Cove Park.

Two three-story-high, 25,000-square-foot, open-outcry trading floors will be the centerpieces of the design for the largest physical commodity exchange in the world, where crude oil, heating oil, gasoline, natural gas, propane, gold,

silver, copper, and financial products are traded. Ten more 42,000-square-foot floors of high-tech trading space will be linked to the gigantic trading floors by escalators and elevators. Completion of the Exchange, located in Lower Manhattan since 1872, is scheduled for 1997.

**Field Reports**

by *Matthew Barhydt*

**T**he New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) has actually made life a bit easier for architects and others in the construction industry. A 24-hour, automated fax and voice-information system was put into place in early September. By dialing 312-8467, callers can receive information about any of the 800,000 buildings listed in the DOB's files, with block and lot numbers, community board numbers, outstanding violations, and filing status. Of course, convenience comes at a cost: \$1.95 per minute.

□ Architect and educator **Karen van Lengen, AIA**, was appointed chair of the architecture and environmental design department at Parsons School of Design in September. She replaces Susana Torre, who left Parsons last year to become director of the Cranbrook Academy of Art. Van Lengen was selected from a field of 80 candidates. Her professional experience includes work as an associate for I. M. Pei & Partners and her own practice. She has taught at the University of Texas, Cornell, Yale, the University of Pennsylvania, and Columbia.

□ Architect **Harley Swedler, AIA**, is one of four contemporary artists, including Arlan Huang, Hap Sakwa, and Mardi-Jo Cohen, whose mixed-media work is currently featured in an exhibition, "Heritage-

History-Tradition," at the Leeor Sabbah Gallery. As Swedler explained, the show was organized to illustrate how the individual design sensibilities of the artists evolved from their cultural backgrounds. Several of his metal, glass, and stone works that Swedler describes as "looking architectural" are slated for purchase by the San Francisco Jewish Museum. The exhibition runs through November 7. The gallery is at #5C, 708 Greenwich Street; viewing is by appointment only (645-5424).

□ Can't bear to sit in the park with the masses? For a limited time only, you can purchase your own private bench, with your name stamped on a mounted brass plate. The Bryant Park Restoration Corporation, private managers of the very public Bryant Park, are selling 63 benches "while supplies last," according to a recent press release. Your new bench must be surrendered to the public during regular park hours, but after 8:00 pm, private security guards will make sure that no one but you makes use of it. (Of course, for nine months of the year, it's dark after 8:00 pm, but that's not really the point.) Ten thousand dollars will get you a cast-concrete bench; only \$5,000 will buy you a more traditional, wrought-iron-and-wood plank bench. For \$29, you may use one of those little green wooden folding chairs, although not exclusively. If executive director Daniel A. Biederman's contention that "through the sale of benches for exclusive use, we can continue to make this the world's greatest small urban park" is not an oxymoron, then what's next — auctioning individual plots of Central Park's Sheep Meadow?



Jack Pette/Esto

*Proposal for the New York Mercantile Exchange in Battery Park City, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill*



Dorothy Alexander

*Karen van Lengen*

## Steven Holl's "Kiasma" at the Urban Center Galleries

by *Nina Rappaport*

**A**n elegant and straightforward presentation of "Kiasma," the Helsinki Museum of Contemporary Art, brought to life the commission Holl won in a competition with three other invited international architects (Kazuo Shinohara, Coop Himmelblau, and Alvaro Siza) and 516 Scandinavian entrants.

Construction begins in December for the museum, which will provide an exquisite atmosphere for cultural events and contemporary art. The museum links disjointed areas of the city on a prominent site in the center of Helsinki, between Alvar Aalto's Finlandia Hall and Eliel Saarinen's Helsinki Station.

Next to the main rectangular volume, a curved standing-seam Rheinzink roof creates a cocoon-like form that curves and fans out across the site, intersecting the space beside it. The curved wall contains skylights that directly illuminate both upper and lower galleries, and deflected light is admitted from the central space.

The plan encourages roaming at will through variously-shaped galleries. "The visitor is confronted with a continuous unfolding of an infinite series of changing perspectives that connect the internal experience to the overall concept of intertwining, or kiasma," Holl explained.

The western edge of the building will border Töölö Bay, which will pass under the building and freeze in winter, as Holl plays off the reflective and sensory qualities of water and ice in relationship to the building.

The installation described the full development of the project in every medium from

concept sketches, watercolors and model studies of overall form, and details, to computer-generated drawings and a complete model.

A seven-minute computer-animated video of the design process, with studies of an ice wall, the site, the sun path at each equinox, and a photo-montage of the building on the site, filled out the view of the project. Material samples were displayed on a side panel.

The exhibition suggested that Holl's sensitive understanding of program, site, and climate, combined with tactile and crafted materials, will create a timeless sculptural work of light forming spaces.

### Steven Holl at the Architectural League

by *Jayne Merkel*

**I**n a lecture as carefully considered and exquisitely crafted as his buildings, Steven Holl explained how he came to create the multisensory architecture he has been developing over the last 20 years. "I was frustrated with the architecture at the end of the twentieth century — both with postmodernism and the nihilistic reaction to it," he said, explaining that he sought in phenomenology a way for architecture to "put essences back into experience."

Any fears of misconstrued philosophic references were squelched as Holl identified eleven "philosophical zones" that apply to architecture, illustrated each with well-chosen slides, and showed clearly how he had brought them into his work.

He explained "enmeshed experience," the merging of object and field, as "when zebras run, a lion can't find a single one," by filling the screen with a maze of stripes in motion. Then he showed the half-open, movable outside walls of the Storefront for Art

and Architecture, which he designed with Vito Acconci last year, where inside and outside are united.

Other phenomenological zones he discussed were "perspectival space," the "zone of light and shadow, the zone of color, the spatiality of night, the duration and perception of time, water, sound, the world of touch, proportion, and scale," and "program."

"Sometimes we are given bizarre programs, but we should try to make something central to the program to drive the design," he said. "In each project, all these phenomenological zones have to fuse."

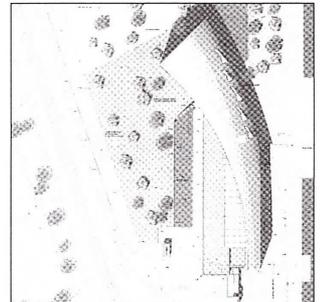
He showed how they actually do in the Palazzo del Cinema in Venice of 1990, where the differences between cinematic time and actual time are explored, and in the 7,000-square-foot house on a waterfall in Dallas, where vernacular materials of concrete block and metal roofs are transformed by light, water, and a sense of flow. At the Helsinki museum Holl's treatment of water and light emphasizes the dramatic differences between the seasons.

In a housing complex in Japan, his concern for program led to 30 different apartment plans, which instantly made the building into a community because every owner wanted to see what the other units were like. In his addition to the first building Eliel and Eero worked on together, the Institute of Science at Cranbrook, "the idea was to touch the building at the fewest possible points but to transform the museum as much as possible."

Holl's interest in color, light, and shadow found unique expression in a small chapel at Seattle University, where masses are held in the evening. "I like to think more about shadow than about

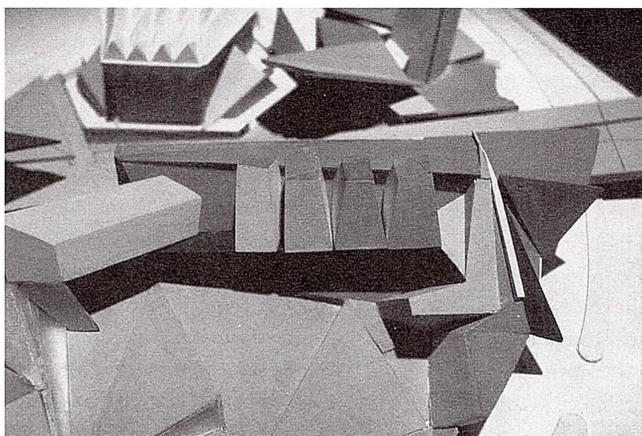
light," he said. With this project, as with others, he demonstrated how his philosophical explorations enabled him to turn a program into art.

The Helsinki Museum of Contemporary Art, was the subject of a summer exhibition, sponsored by the Architectural League at the Urban Center Galleries. Holl gave an Architectural League lecture at Rockefeller University's Caspary Auditorium on September 7, and his "Kiasma" and Seattle University Chapel are featured in the "Light Construction" show currently at the Museum of Modern Art. (see pages 10-12)



*Site plan with building geometry, Kiasma Museum, Helsinki, Finland, Steven Holl*

as•smp•tote (as'•im•tot) *n.*  
*(Math)* a straight line that continually approaches a curve, but never meets it within a finite distance  
 [Gk. *a-*, neg.; *sun*, with; *ptosis*, a falling].



# ASYMPTOTE



**Lisa Anne Couture** is a faculty member at Parsons School

of Design. She worked for Eisenman Architects and several small firms. She has taught at the University of Michigan as a Muschenheim Fellow, the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, and the University of Montreal. She received her first professional degree from Carlton University in Canada and her M.Arch. at Yale University.

**Hani Rashid** is an adjunct associate professor of architecture at Columbia



University. He worked for Daniel Liebeskind and has taught at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, the Stadelshule in Frankfurt, Germany, the Royal Danish Academy in Copenhagen, Denmark, and the Southern California Institute of Architecture in Los Angeles. He received his B.Arch. from Carlton University and his M.Arch. from the Cranbrook Academy of Art.

*Asymptote* was founded in New York City in 1987.

Hani Rashid and Lise Anne Couture, and their firm *Asymptote*, are probably best known as the winners of the 1988 Los Angeles West Coast Gateway international design competition for their entry,

the Steel Cloud. Their projects are provocative and complex; perhaps because their work so defies all categorization, they have yet to build.

In August, Rizzoli published *Asymptote: Architecture at the Interval* (8.5 x 11, 160 pages, 120 illustrations, 20 color, paper, \$30.00), written and designed by Rashid and Couture.

Rashid and Couture recently spoke with *Oculus* about the book and their work.

**Oculus:** Has the process of pulling the book together changed the way that you look at your work?

**Lise Anne Couture:** You always discover overlaps that are not necessarily intended ones, threads running through the work that become more obvious. It was a real period of growth. Maybe it's the closing of a chapter — an initial seven years of being in New York.

**Oculus:** You call for a new architecture that is “precisely misaligned.” Misaligned with what?

**Hani Rashid:** The notion of “precise misalignment” is a very interesting philosophical position. We are working both within and without the tradition of architecture — a pre-

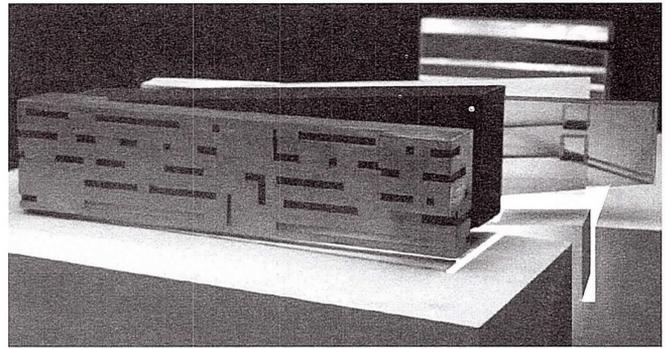
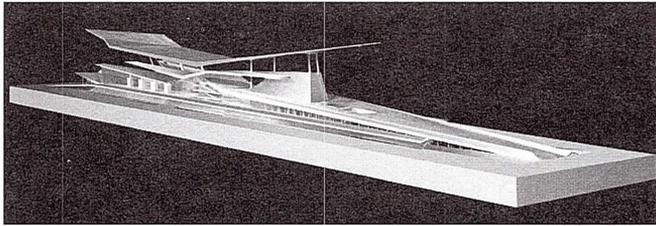
cise misalignment with history, a precise misalignment with expected emotions. Attacking the program in the spirit of precise misalignment means that you pursue the program with all the rigor and discipline and responsibility of the architect, but at the same time you look for those nuances of contradiction.

**Oculus:** Your work takes as its reference what you believe is the contemporary condition, so you say, “Central to our work is a critique of technology.”

**HR:** A critique is a way of unraveling or deciphering or revealing. So yes, technology is absolutely critical not only to our work but to society today. If you look at projects like the Rice Museum [Tohoku Historical Museum] in Japan, there is absolutely no discussion either in the text or in the building itself of any sort of contemporary technology; yet one gets a sense from looking at the building that it's a technological artifact.

**Oculus:** There is a dichotomy between projects that I would say are overtly subversive and those that are more passive.

**HR:** The [Alexandria] Library and the [Steel] Cloud, and maybe Yokohama [passenger ship terminal], are projects of exuberance and celebration.



There is an expression of a certain kind of optimism.

In Gorbachev's Russia, we were designing a project [the Moscow State Theater] that's about fear in a society. We saw this as another kind of celebration — maybe a more severe one — but really the project was about a wrenching open of those closed doors. In designing the Groningen Courthouse [in the Netherlands], we were working with what we saw as an extremely austere and almost tedious judicial system.

It may be that these two systems lend themselves to stricter, more severe geometry — they carry those clues.

**Oculus:** How do you reconcile elements in projects that respond to real urban programs but embody a breakdown of traditional physical, spatial, and philosophical boundaries?

**HR:** I don't consider our work visionary or hypothetical. We are dealing with what we call the dispersion or the dissolution of the object. Very few of our [buildings] lend themselves to any kind of "objecthood" — they become a kind of "field condition" within the city.

Architects are holding on to the city as an artifact where they can place their objects. We don't see buildings anymore. We don't see cities as a set of formal combinations, structures, or entities.

**Oculus:** What happened with the Steel Cloud project?

**LAC:** The individual who was in charge of the blue-ribbon committee was very committed to the project, and still is. It's somewhat on the back burner, but simmering nevertheless. It was unfortunate that the popular press didn't even want to give it a chance. It seemed to be received as a kind of fantasy in the tradition of Hollywood. They couldn't look at this project as having any kind of potential for bringing something to the center of the city. On the other hand, the controversy has been very good for us. It allowed us to get some attention and pursue other projects.

**Oculus:** What do you think of all the proposals slated for Times Square, in light of your own several years ago?

**LAC:** My sense is that the development that is going on now with clients like Disney and Madame Tussaud's tends to parody Times Square, rather than trying to find some kind

of authentic sense of what Times Square really is or can be. Some of the developments are leaning much more towards very commercialized ideas about culture. It is a paradoxical site, because for those who have never been to New York, it's an icon of New York. For those of us who live in New York, it's the antithesis of what we think of as New York.

**Oculus:** Is building a way of testing the validity of your ideas?

**LAC:** Building would allow us to explore certain ideas in another way. I wouldn't want to say that there exists a hierarchy of building over experimentation, although the profession generally views these kinds of experiments in that way — "the proof is in the building."

**HR:** Architecture to me is a fantastic pursuit. Along that pursuit are these terrific offramps, and one of those is building. Our desire to build is inherent in every project we've ever done. In some ways Lise Anne and I both feel confident enough now with our ideas, our work, and our interests that building would be a suitable venue to take.

*opposite:*  
*Alexandria library*

*left:*  
*Yokohama*  
*passenger ship terminal*

*right:*  
*Groningen National Courthouse*

**BY MATTHEW BARHYDT**

## Michael Hopkins at the National Academy of Design

by Jayne Merkel

**T**he high-tech structural expressionism of Sir Michael Hopkins, R.A., and his wife, Patty, started in a little sixteenth-century timber-framed cottage in Suffolk, which they bought for about \$600 when they were students at the Architectural Association in the 1960s.

"Its simple plan with free-standing columns was like what we learned about at college," he told a standing-room-only audience at the National Academy of Design on September 15. The lecture, in conjunction with the exhibition, "Contemporary British Architecture: Recent Projects from the Royal Academy of Arts' Summer Exhibition" (*Oculus*, September 1995, p. 9), was cosponsored by the Architectural League of New York.

The Hopkinses' first little house helped convince them that "the only way we can make good architecture is through a clarity of structural expression where the whole building — the use and plan — is understood as you approach it." They worked on the renovation of the cottage for seven years. Finally, in 1975, they were able to translate its principles into steel in a house they built for themselves in London, heavily influenced by Philip Johnson's Glass House and by Charles and Ray Eames's house in Los Angeles. "Only in ours, we tried to use as few components as possible," Hopkins explained — a rule that has governed their approach to various materials over the years.

With Patty seated nearby, Sir Michael showed an impressive array of projects in which they pushed structural elements both technically and aes-

thetically to achieve as much strength as possible with as few means — the Schlumberger Cambridge research laboratories, a cutlery factory in Darbyshire, a building for IBM in the Oxfordshire countryside, and the Mound Stand at Lord's Cricket Grounds in London, which was the first time. They "were faced with building in an urban context" and the first time they used brick. They did it because their stadium seating replaced earlier stands built on top of an historic brick arcade, which they decided to repair, extend, and use as a base for the lightweight seating covered with one of their tent-like membrane roofs.

Despite all the postmodern buildings on New York streets, it must not be obvious that context is an issue here. Hopkins said, "You maybe don't have this idea here, but for some time now we've had the notion that what you do should grow out of what is already there." That notion created a dilemma when they set out to design the IBM building. "We set up an urban site in the middle of nowhere," a solution that worried him a little until he realized that his countrymen had done the same thing when they created London's Grosvenor Square hundreds of years before and at Bath, Edinburgh, and Regents Park in the eighteenth century.

He discussed his firm's designs for an addition to the rather classical but modern Bracken House building in the City of London, an office building "for some 2,000 tax inspectors in Nottingham," a small theater and music space for Emmanuel College at Cambridge, a little tent-roofed ticket pavilion at Buckingham Palace, a major addition to the Westminster Parliament Buildings, and the summer

opera house at Glyndebourne. Although Americans tend to think of structurally innovative and expressive work like this as a particularly British phenomenon, the influences Hopkins cited tended to be American. The way Hopkins thinks about structure and materials comes close to the way Louis I. Kahn did, and Kahn's Exeter Library had an effect on both Glimbourn and Nottingham. Hopkins even described his work as being in the tradition of Mies van der Rohe.

"When I gave a lecture at IIT, I was knocked out by how they just went out and did this and then it all came to a halt in the early 1960s. I remember thinking Mies would have loved to have practiced now that we've developed all the paints and sealants and fire retardants he needed so he wouldn't have to cover his columns in concrete and then sheath them in steel."

The exhibition at the National Academy of Design, in which Hopkins participated only through his lecture (no drawings or models of his firm's buildings were on view), certainly reinforced the impression of British preeminence in structural exploration with projects by Richard Rogers, Norman Foster, Nicholas Grimshaw, and others. The work in the show tended to be either high-tech or rigorously historicizing in the manner of Quinlan Terry, though some of that work was for restorations.

In the question period after Hopkins's lecture, a member of the audience thinking about the neo-traditionalism Prince Charles promotes, asked how a pioneering architect like Hopkins ever got the commission to add on to Parliament. Hopkins replied, "There's a bit of a road in between. It's a project that's been around for about 80 years. The chief prob-

lem was an above-ground transit station on the site. No one had been able to solve this. I got the idea of pushing the station down, so now we're rebuilding it seven stories below ground. Then we'll go to work on the addition."

In a more mundane vein, someone else asked, "What kind of computer program do you use?" And Hopkins answered, "I can't read a computer screen." Bending toward his wife, he asked, "Patty, what kind of computer program do we use?" Then he added, "I don't like it. You go into the office on a weekend to look at the drawings and ask, 'Where are the bloody drawings?' To me, it's an interruption of the working process."

## Two New Books on the Art of Engineering

by Lester Paul Korzilius

**B**ill Addis's new study of collaborations between British architects and structural engineers, *The Art of Structural Engineering* (London: Artemis, 1994, 8.5 x 11 inches, 459 illustrations, 61 color, 144 pages, paper, \$34.95), contains many breathtaking examples by Norman Foster, Richard Rogers, Michael Hopkins, Nicholas Grimshaw, Arup Associates with Ove Arup & Partners (OAP), Anthony Hunt, Peter Rice, and Buro Happold. It is most valuable for showing how creative professionals can use a changing technological and manufacturing base to produce works that would have been unthinkable 20 years ago and, more importantly, emphasizing the process in this type of architecture.

Addis shows how the computer is radically changing design and construction. The computer defines complex geometries more easily than manual means do, so Buro Happold could employ double-

curved anticlastic geometries in tensioned fabric structures, and Nicholas Grimshaw and Anthony Hunt could use a complex, curved truss system with a minimum of different components for the Waterloo train station terminus.

Computer-controlled machine tools can also save money, and fabricators can manufacture complex components for a fraction of the cost of manual production. The Montreuil Sports Stadium outside Paris has curved steel box girders, with varying cross-sectional areas made of four uniquely curved faces. The contractor cut welded steel plates with computer-controlled cutting tools, just as masons used computer-controlled machine tools to cut granite pieces with a tolerance of one millimeter for the cable-stayed granite arches of the Pavilion of the Future that MBM and Peter Rice/OAP required.

These architectural and structural solutions are the result of considerable interaction between architects and structural engineers. In many other buildings, a form is imposed a priori by the architect, and the engineer struggles to make it work, no matter the structural difficulties. A refined and elegant design like the communications tower in Barcelona by Foster Associates with OAP would not have been possible if either party had worked in isolation, nor would the roof of the Chur bus station in Switzerland, by Richard Brosi and Robert Obirst with Peter Rice, which has a delicious, minimalist glass-and-steel roof that is exquisitely detailed both architecturally and structurally.

The book concludes with a case study of the design process for the Commerzbank in Frankfurt by Foster Associates with OAP, and describes the range of options

that the architect and engineer evaluated during the design process. The apparent simplicity of the finished building belies the level of thought behind all the parts of this project.

Peter Rice provides a more in-depth view of the process in *An Engineer Imagines* (London: Artemis London Limited, 1994, 7.25 x 10.25 inches, 302 illustrations, 208 pages, cloth, \$49.95). "What is needed is just courage, care, and attention to detail, and above all belief," he explains, summarizing his view on the integration of architecture and structural engineering.

Rice, a gifted structural engineer, played a major role in some of the most prominent works of architecture of the last 20 years. He passed away at an early age in 1992. This book, written while he was ill, is a series of recollections and thoughts on the nature of structural engineering and architecture.

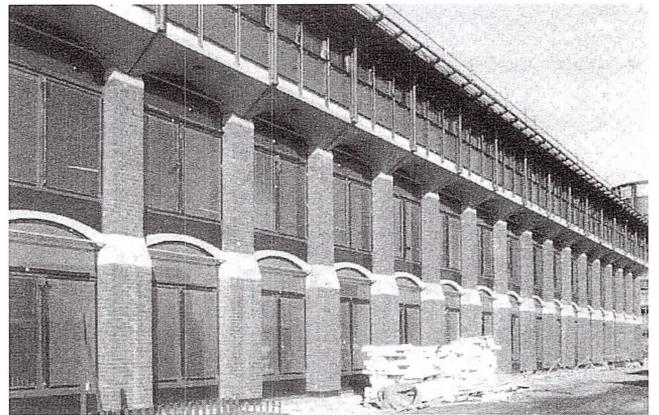
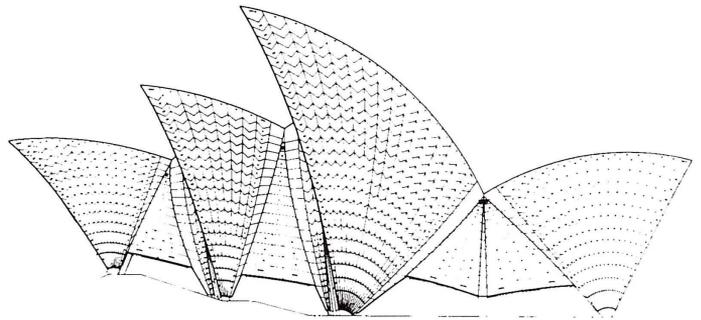
Some of the structural projects on which Rice collaborated included Jorn Utzon's Sydney Opera House, Piano & Rogers's Centre Pompidou in Paris, Rogers's Lloyds of London, Piano's Kansai Airport and de Menil Museum in Houston, Hopkins's Mound Stand Cricket Stadium in London, and Fainsilber's Museum of Science at La Villette. Rice worked his entire career with Ove Arup & Partners, the London-based engineering firm. Later in his career, he formed associations with Renzo Piano and then with RFR, where he consulted on many unique glazed structures such as the roofs of the latest addition to Andreu's Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris and Brosi and Obirst's Chur bus station in Switzerland.

Rice describes the design process of these projects and the intensive interaction that

occurred between the architect, structural engineer, and the construction industry. He speaks of engineering solutions in a way that is interesting and informative to non-engineers. His book ought to be required reading for architects who aspire to create buildings with significant structural engineering as part of the design concept.

*top:*  
Sydney Opera House  
drawing showing  
the organization  
of tile lids on shell surfaces,  
Jorn Utzon

*bottom:*  
Inland Revenue Offices,  
Nottingham,  
Michael Hopkins & Partners



## BANANA

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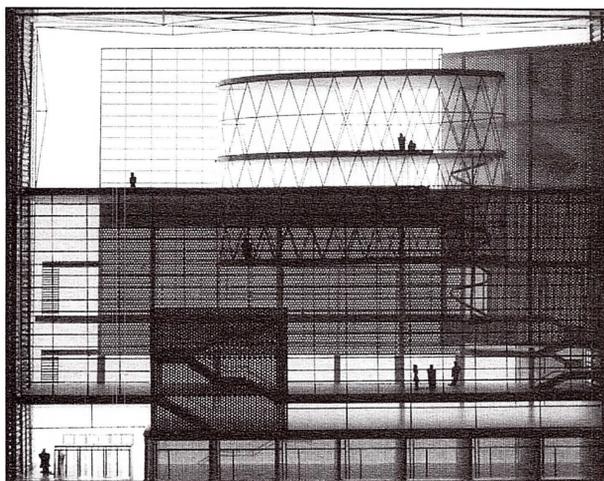
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**Elusively “Light Construction”**

by Jayne Merkel

Anyone passing the Museum of Modern Art on 53rd Street can glimpse the glowing new architecture in the “Light Construction” show in the first-floor galleries. The big, clear glass window offers a direct, head-on view of light-filled and lightweight buildings with window walls that veil, conceal, or advertise what goes on behind them mysteriously, ambiguously, or titillatingly.



Congress Center,  
Salzburg,  
Fumihiko Maki

The 34 recent buildings and projects in the show share a sensibility, a delicate, refined, frankly modern but not at all modernist sensibility. Anything but functionalist and forthright, it is hard to pin down. The hard-edged modern materials — glass and steel, plastics and electronics — screen and filter, deflect and confuse, as much as support and contain. The visitor who tours the show conscientiously, studies the catalog, and thinks about the work on view will also go away with a glimpse — as opposed to a clear understanding — of what is going on in architecture today.

That is partly because of the elusive nature of the work itself, partly because so many ideas are suggested by it, and

partly because Terrence Riley, chief curator of the museum’s department of architecture and design, did not intend to present a definitive survey of the still-emerging trends. His idea for the show began with an observation that the outer wall of Jean Nouvel’s Cartier Foundation in Paris is not the building envelope but “a sort of palisade of steel and glass” in front of the actual facade. When he thought about it, he realized that this elegant, high-tech-looking tease-of-a-wall acted as a screen, like the coverings of other recent buildings he admired. And he decided, for his first major survey show, to simply present a selection of work in this vein.

A number of the buildings on view are well worth contemplation: Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron’s Goetz Collection in Munich, Toyo Ito’s ITM Building in Matasuyama and his Shimosuwa Municipal Museum in Japan, Nouvel’s Cartier Foundation, Fumihiko Maki’s Congress Center in Salzburg, Steven Holl’s Helsinki Museum of Contemporary Art, Ben van Beerkel’s ACOM Office Building in Amersfoort, Annette Gigon and Mike Guyer’s Kirchner Museum in Davos, Nicholas Grimshaw and Partners’ Waterloo International Terminal in London, Renzo Piano’s Kansai International Airport outside Osaka, and even Charles Thannhauser and Jack Esteron’s little Definitions Fitness Center 2 in New York and a tiny hand-built Leisure Studio in Espoo, Finland, by a group of four young architects. Many others are beautiful, dazzling, or intriguing.

The idea of starting with remembered architectural experience, instead of a preconceived thesis, is interesting, important, and I think, contrary to much recent practice.

The problem, however, is that a premise that begins with an observation is difficult to explain in the exhibition format. The colored photographs from the catalog that have been blown up and placed under glass on the gallery walls do not capture the aesthetic. The bigger backlit photographs do a better job, and the models translate better still. But this show, more than most, suffers from the limitation of all architectural exhibitions — the necessity to represent rather than present an artifact, as you could if it were a painting.

Another problem is that Riley’s observation gave rise to a whole series of recognitions, as the catalog essay reveals. The show is not just about translucent walls or “skins,” as he prefers to call them. Riley identifies a number of concerns implicit in the works — translucency in architecture, ambiguity of surface, the use of light in building, nocturnal transformations, lightweight structural systems, new technologies, changing attitudes toward technology, new attitudes toward materials, and architectural incorporation of electronic imagery. It is a lot to digest, and the exhibition format does not lend itself to that kind of catalytic exploration either.

A symposium at Columbia began that effort, but its many voices and many ideas only set off more fireworks. Though each is likely to ignite a spark somewhere, at the end of the four-hour marathon, no conclusions were forthcoming.

It was difficult enough to try to cope with architectural projects ranging widely in scale, building type, structure, materials, treatment, and intention. The fact that a handful of artworks had also been included

only confused the issues, as architecture critic Herbert Muschamp noted in *The New York Times*. None of the panelists even tried to deal with them.

But the global sweep of the projects helps show that the tendencies are not localized, though all the participants come from the United States, Japan, or Western Europe. And all the Americans, except Frank Gehry and Harry Wolf of Los Angeles and Michael Van Valkenburgh of Cambridge, Massachusetts, are from the New York area, a sharp change from a few years ago when Californians captured so much attention. Tod Williams and Billie Tsien, Philip Johnson, Joel Sanders of Princeton, artists Dan Graham, Dennis Adams, and Melissa Gould, as well as Holl, Tschumi, and Thanhauser and Esterson had works included.

One reason the same tendencies are manifesting themselves on three continents is that architects and artists are working all over the world, as the projects illustrate. With a whole world to choose from, it is easy to quibble with Riley's choices. The omissions I mind most are Diller + Scofidio's Slow House and, as a precedent, Venturi's National Football Hall of Fame, which should at least have been mentioned in the catalog essay. But the very fact that some projects seem to be missing or unnecessary proves that there is some internal consistency to the show. And there sure is a lot of captivating architecture to contemplate.

### Sorting Out "Light Construction"

A star-studded symposium on September 22, sponsored by the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation at Columbia

University and the Museum of Modern Art, attempted to sort out the numerous ideas elicited by the show.

Dean Bernard Tschumi, whose Glass Video Gallery in Groningen, the Netherlands, was included, participated with several of the other architects and a host of scholars. Toyo Ito of Japan, Jacques Herzog of Switzerland, and Iñaki Abalos and Juan Herreros of Spain were joined by the curator, Terrence Riley, and Kenneth Frampton, Michael Hays, Eeva Pelkonen, Guy Nordenson, Hugh Dutton, Greg Lynn, Mark Taylor, and Joan Ockman.

Riley, who is an architect (*Oculus*, February 1995, p. 9), began by showing slides of his own work with John Keenan to explain how his interests had circuitously lead him to the idea for the show. "Since our great concern was with making things, my first idea was for a show called 'Architectonics' — essentially about materials and the reveal and what the act of construction really means." He started thinking about materials — wood, steel, glass. "When I came to glass," he said, "I realized it was a material that really had no image for itself. So I moved to 'Transparencies,' and I recognized that there was this architecture with transparency, but it wasn't always glass." What he said he finds most important is that "there has been a definite shift from the form of an object to its skin," and it represents "the notion of a different way of seeing."

Riley noted the repeated use of the words "lightness" and "lightweight" in critical and philosophical literature today, and said that buildings like Renzo Piano's Kansai Airport are "an architecture with no terra firma." He believes what

is happening now, before the computer completely takes over, is "in between. We are neither here nor there," he said.

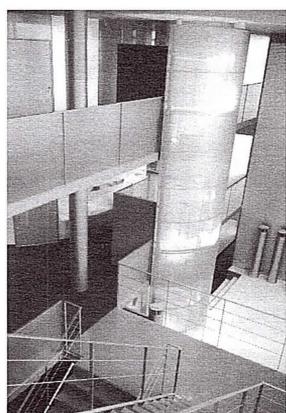
Tschumi agreed that "form here becomes somehow secondary" and that the work implies "new modes of vision." He believes it may lead to "a new way to see relationships in structure." He suggested that the question raised by them is "Do we as architects work to invent new types of construction, or do we conform to the very conservative construction industry?"

Hugh Dutton, an architect with RFR, Paris, whose own high-tech work pushes structure to new limits, said, "To me, there are two kinds of lightness, of structure and of a skin that can become translucent." He talked about new "high performance materials that allow a concentration of structure and, more recently, of new possibilities because of the use of the computer," describing recent developments in skin technology such as baking filaments into glass, glass that can be walked on, perforated steel mesh between two sheets of glass, glass that forms a screen for projection, laminated stone only one millimeter thick, and even transparent glass being used structurally.

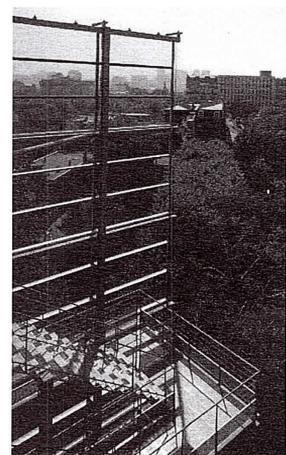
Toyo Ito, who stole the show in the galleries with three very different projects, all of which were impressive, captured the limelight at the symposium too, even though he spoke through an interpreter. He started out by saying that he had done some research and figured out that the price per weight of architecture was much cheaper than that of cars or domestic appliances. In fact, "it was just about the same as the price of potatoes."



*The Goetz Collection, Munich, Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron*



*View of atrium from upper level, ITM building, Matsuyama, Japan, Toyo Ito*

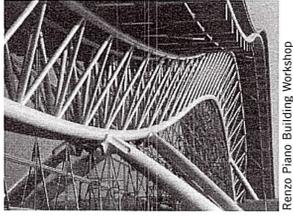


*View toward garden, Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art, Jean Nouvel*

Hideo Suzuki

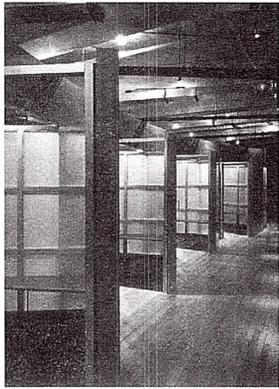
Shinichi Kishida

Philippe Ruault



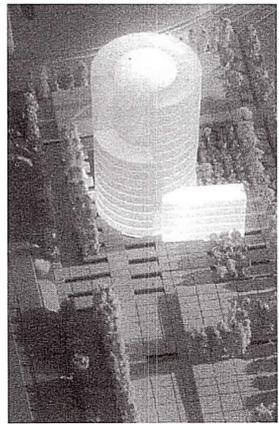
Renzo Piano Building Workshop

*Renzo Piano Building Workshop,  
Kansai International Airport, Japan,  
main terminal building,  
lateral facade*



Brian Rose

*Definitions Fitness Center 2,  
Thanhauer and Esterson*



Adrian Veltescu

*ABN-AMRO head office building,  
aerial view of model,  
Harry Wolf*

Ito uses the new lightness and the economies it brings not simply to express the potential of structure but “to create an architecture and an awareness of urban space that are very fluid.” Especially in his now-dismantled Tower of the Winds in Yokohama, he used “the perforated aluminum skin to record the change of the time.” After sundown, a chorus of small lamps, floodlights, and neon rings, controlled by computer and activated by wind velocity and noise, played a symphony of “environmental music.” The project, which served as a water tank and ventilation shaft for an underground shopping concourse, was also “about how to visualize the components in our urban life like the traffic noise or wind.”

Guy Nordenson, a structural engineer with Ove Arup & Partners, New York, said that the visual images in many of the projects in the show derive from television and other electronic media. “The lightness is the lightness of bits, a system that seems mysterious because it cannot be seen” and goes back to “that lightness champion, Bucky Fuller.”

Michael Hays, the theorist from Harvard, also traced its roots to the postwar period. In the catalog essay, “Terry begins with Hilberseimer,” he noted that the German’s International Style work “had a large psychological correlate with the repetition of the conveyor belt and dance lines of the time like the Rockettes.” Although Eeva Pelkonen, the Finnish cultural historian now teaching at Yale, had placed the sources of the show in the seventies, “I’ll push it back to the fifties,” Hays said, “to billboards and the time when decentralization of the distribution of goods began to change perception from a depth model to a model of surfaces. The fifties was also when

TV, with its reflective surfaces, became readily available.”

The catalog essay emphasizes the difference between the flickering transparent surfaces of the International Style and the amorphous translucent skins of the buildings in the show. But Joan Ockman, director of the Buell Center at Columbia, pointed out that when people first saw the Crystal Palace in the middle of the nineteenth century, “a common perception was that the materiality of the building dissolved....A hundred years later, the Smithsons went to the United States and saw Lever House and other buildings of its era and wrote of the magical distortions created by the curtain wall. And here we are at the end of the twentieth century, and we’re still optically thrilled and bedazzled by glass surfaces.” What she found distinctively new was a willingness to do what Ito had done, “admit changeability into the exterior, accept the changeability of the city.”

Jacques Herzog and Kenneth Frampton of Columbia also mentioned transformational properties of traditional curtain walls. “I was having lunch today at the Four Seasons, and it’s magical,” Herzog explained. “I less and less make distinctions between old artists and new artists, traditional and nontraditional forms.” Frampton said, “In Mies’s Farnsworth House, it [the curtain wall] should be this clear thing, but the glass does reflect. And the Seagram’s Building remains one of the most amazing buildings in the city with a mysterious presence. Its back is stone, but it looks like glass. We know one thing, but we see the other. It goes back and forth. It connects with remarks that Herzog made, that under certain light all materials change.”

Both architects agreed that the buildings in the show were different from earlier modern examples, but Herzog resisted the idea that they were as similar to one another as the essay implied. “I don’t think we should try to find a common line for the whole show. I rather think, like Rem said, that some of these projects have an almost arbitrary similarity. They may look the same, but they have totally different backgrounds and intentions.”

The problem he identified is common to all survey shows. As Riley noted, “The concerns of the individual architects get distorted slightly when they agree to go into one of these ventures.” Something is lost and something is gained.

**Greg Lynn at Artists Space**

by Amy Lambert

Ten years ago the term “web jockey” was meaningless, connoting perhaps spider-like creations and equestrian skills. Today, however, the phrase describes someone on the cutting edge of computer technology, and its use to describe an architect provides interesting insight into an emerging experimental direction in architecture.

Peter Eisenman, FAIA, was certainly aware of this when he selected Greg Lynn to show at Artists Space in Soho as the representative of a “new generation of architects for whom the conventions of the past have little meaning.” The show, which closed October 28 but remains accessible on the Internet, presented a whole different way not only of depicting architecture but of understanding and creating it.

The exhibition consisted of a full-scale model of the space itself, generated by computer animation, with five projects displayed as tiny resin models in cases. Three video screens explained the process by which he had created the exhibition electronically.

As he explained in the introduction, “historically, architects have understood movement as the travel of a moving eye in space. Yet architecture, in both its realization and conception, has been understood as static.” Thus, the exhibition brought movement into form by animating the forms themselves.

The results were more complex, and sometimes more confusing, than traditional images. Certain projects such as the competition scheme for the Port Authority Bus Terminal, with its ramp-covering and information screen, emerged with amazingly sim-

ple, logical, fluid, and functional forms. Others, including the house prototype models and a plan for docks at Yokohama, are less legible as completed projects. While the models presented were compelling, it was difficult to discern how the final form would actually appear.

The beautiful, translucent miniatures revealed in their scale and detail, as much as in their form, the advances in architectural conception and rendering made possible by computers. They described a new way of thinking about architecture, which is exciting and somewhat troubling. With a computer capable of generating both a prototype and the form, or in this case, every feature of the exhibition, the role of architect may be reduced to that of merely “web jockey.”

That possibility should come as no surprise since the architect who selected Lynn to represent the cutting edge of architecture was Eisenman, the architect who ten years ago sought to suppress the authorial voice in his works. Lynn’s use of forces directed at a site to generate the form of design resembles Eisenman’s own use of computers to trace pre-existing buildings that create a new form when extended over time.

For Eisenman, Lynn’s work represents something experimental in the sense that it adds an element of critique lacking in other, simply avant garde projects. By using the computer as more than a design tool, Lynn advances the possibilities for computers and design. This “breathing picturesque movement into lifeless Cartesian spaces” transcends the typical architecture and also the usual exhibit, since the entirety remains available to virtual visits on the Internet.

**What Did You Think of the “Light Construction” Show at the Museum of Modern Art?**

“I was pleased to see the MoMA devoting a good amount of space — and ground-floor space — to new ideas in architecture. Terry really deserves a lot of credit for covering the spectrum from Frank Lloyd Wright to progressive new work from around the world. He has the ambition to try to digest the history of the modern movement as well as what it is moving toward, and that, I think, is really an important thing for the museum to do. It is a thematic show of contemporary trends, not a definitive show. One thing he is offering is the notion that style exists. It’s not as calculated as the deconstructivist architecture show. He is saying, “Isn’t it surprising that all this new work displays these qualities?”

**Carol Willis teaches architectural history at Columbia University.**

**Her latest book, *Form Follows Finance: Skyscrapers and Skylines in New York and Chicago* is coming out this month.**

“We all think it is intriguing to have an exhibition that devotes itself to a specific aspect of architecture like this without attempting to shoe-horn diverse projects into a common ideology or movement. Exhibitions that are based on an ideology or purport to articulate a movement achieve that at the expense of each individual project’s inherent complexity and specific intentions for form, so we feel that this exhibition puts the myriad issues of architecture ahead of an attempt to create a rhetorical consistency. Also, we think all the works are really beautiful.”

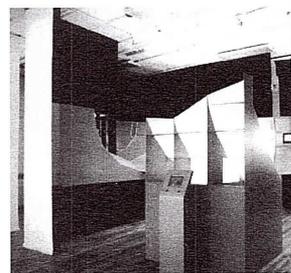
**Charles Thanhauser, Jack Esterson, Kenneth Levenson, and their colleagues at Thanhauser and Esterson, who practice architecture in New York, have work in the show.**

“A strong idea for a show. It would have been interesting to include more details on new technologies and materials which make some of these projects possible.”

**Karen van Lengen, AIA, practices architecture in New York and chairs the department of architecture and environmental design at Parsons School of Design.**

“I went to the ‘Light Construction’ show, and you know, I think they spelled the work ‘Lite’ incorrectly.”

**An anonymous student overheard by a faculty member at Columbia.**



*Greg Lynn Artists Space*

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**Respecting the Past,  
Anticipating the Future**

by *Kira Gould*

**E**ven without a single slide, Beyer Blinder Belle got a warm welcome from an AIA New York Chapter audience at the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum this fall. Perhaps the partners thought their architecture, preservation, and planning work — such projects as Ellis Island, Grand Central Terminal, and South Street Seaport — were well-known to a hometown crowd. Five partners — only **James Marston Fitch**, Hon. AIA, was absent, abroad on business — spoke about the New York firm’s 1995 Architecture Firm Award, presented at the National Convention.

Introducing the partners, **Marilyn Jordan Taylor**, AIA New York Chapter president, commended the firm for “remaining true to the collegial spirit,” even during the fiercely individualistic 1980s. **Frederick Bland**, FAIA, opened the discussion by presenting the firm’s work over the past 27 years as a process of “embracing the existing in search of the new.”

**Richard Blinder**, FAIA, discussed what he thinks is the question mark hanging behind architecture and preservation today, Do contextualism and preservation get in the way of the new and the bold? “New York needs bright and new buildings,” he insisted, “but also the kind of preservation that reminds us where we are.”

**John Belle**, FAIA, warned listeners, most of whom counted themselves among the half million who pass through Grand Central Terminal each day, that construction will begin soon...and that the return of shopping, the station’s backbone, will return the station to its place as part of New York City street life.

**John H. Beyer**, FAIA, enthusiastically described the firm’s involvement in the Erie Canal plan, a 524-mile-long project involving dozens of communities. “It’s really the economic revitalization of upstate New York,” he said. “After agriculture, tourism is the top state money-maker. We are making this whole area into a recreation site that’s 90 percent wilderness.”

Bland’s reference to the New York Hall of Science, designed in 1964 by Wallace Harrison for the World’s Fair and reopening in the spring after an addition that will have doubled its size, prompted **Richard Southwick**, AIA, to mention the continuing volume of preservation work. “Our firm and others have begun to see tremendous growth in the custodianship of modern landmarks,” he said. Belle agreed, adding, “Even in the twenty-first century, the livability of cities will be important. It will always be important to have an affinity for the past and the energy to look to the future.”

**Visions for New York’s  
Newest Oldest Neighborhood**

by *Kira Gould*

**I**t’s nearly impossible to describe Lower Manhattan without a good dose of hyperbole if you are Tony Goldman and you are talking about that neighborhood as the center of Manhattan’s next urban revival. As the guest speaker at a recent joint meeting of the AIA New York Chapter’s Lower Manhattan Rezoning Task Force and the Housing Committee, the owner and president of Goldman Properties compared the towering buildings to the Rockies: “Amid the majesty of these fabulous mountains and the intensity of the ridges, there is a plateau and a mountaintop lake — the heart and mind

take a deep breath. Enclaves like this in the Wall Street area are Stone, Beaver, and Broad streets.” That’s where he said he believes the rebirth will begin, in these “breaks to the bigness of the buildings.”

He advocated developing a host of restaurants and retail stores. The first, his Wall Street Kitchen and Bar, will open in a few months at 70 Broad Street (adjacent to the New York Information and Technology Center that opened last month) in a restored five-story bank building amid a cluster of low-rise, historic buildings. “These are the only areas where groups of small buildings are left together,” Goldman pointed out. “We have to save them.”

His passion for restoration is not mitigated by the developer angst that typically surfaces when the subject of preservation comes up. “I would like to see a National Register Historic District for Lower Manhattan,” Goldman said. He appealed to architects to help forge a plan “to introduce that notion to the private sector. They need to embrace or at least accept that it’s important to the community both symbolically and economically.” Goldman said he believes that federal rehabilitation tax credits will enhance the financial incentives the Mayor has proposed, making substantial investments into historic properties likely in the months ahead.

His proactive stance on preservation is reflected in his multilayered commitment to the area. He said he learned in previous projects — the Upper West Side in the sixties, Soho in the seventies, and Miami’s South Beach in the eighties — to address a neighborhood holistically, with restaurant, retail, and residential components.

To make this urban center life more livable, Goldman recommended a residence type he’s already comfortable with:

lofts. “That’s my thing,” he said, “but it also makes sense with the trend of the future. The most important housing type in the next century will be mixed-use live-and-work spaces.”

Architects could step in and take the lead here, too, Goldman said. “I would suggest that they learn to recognize properties that are ripe for conversion. Perhaps they could even start being the entrepreneurs instead of waiting for the client. A few architects could grab a building together, either for living or working space, or both.” He concluded that architects who position themselves as specialists in adaptive reuse, especially in areas poised for rejuvenation, are certain to find themselves ahead of the game in the long run.

**Crafting Strategies for  
Inmate Health Care**

by *Kira Gould*

**I**t’s often a source of grim humor among architects that only those firms designing hospitals or prisons will prosper into the twenty-first century. Architect **Barbara Nadel**, AIA, has combined the two; she specializes in the planning and design of prison medical facilities. And her expertise helps to save cities and states millions.

This summer, Nadel spoke at the American Correctional Association’s 125th annual meeting, where 4,000 correctional practitioners convened to learn how jurisdictions around the country, from the city to federal levels, handle the problems associated with the incarceration of a rapidly growing population of Americans with AIDS, HIV, and strains of tuberculosis, who are entitled to free medical care.

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## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

November 2, 8:30 am  
*Professional Practice*

November 2, 6:00 pm  
*Marketing and Public Relations*

November 6, 6:00 pm  
*Public Architects*

November 6, 6:00 pm  
*Historic Buildings*

November 9, 6:00 pm  
*Minority Resources*

November 13, 6:30 pm  
*Learning By Design*

November 14, 8:00 am  
*Architecture for Justice*

November 14, 6:00 pm  
*Housing*

November 14, 6:00 pm  
*Computer Applications at  
 Gensler & Associates*

November 15, 12:30 pm  
*Architecture for Education*

November 19, 6:00 pm  
*Building Codes*

November 20, 5:30 pm  
*Health Facilities*

December 4, 6:00 pm  
*Public Architects*

December 7, 8:30 am  
*Professional Practice*

December 7, 6:00 pm  
*Marketing and Public Relations*

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

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 at 212-683-0023, ext. 16*

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

**Exhibition of Student Work.** *Columbia University GSAPP, Arthur Ross Architectural Gallery, Buell Hall. 854-3473. Closes November 11.*

**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.*

**Constructions.** *The Decoration and Design Building, 979 Third Ave. 759-7008. Closes November 16.*

**Beyond the Box: Exploring Urban Design of Superstores.** *The Municipal Art Society, Urban Center Galleries, 457 Madison Ave. 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.*

**Joel Sokolov: City Views.** *Michael Ingbar Gallery of Architectural Art, 568 Broadway. 334-1100. Closes December 2.*

**Vision for a Hudson River Park.** *The Municipal Art Society, Urban Center, 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.*

**Personal Pursuits: The Creations and Collections of Today's Top Designers.** *The New York School of Interior Design, 170 E. 70th St. 472-1500. Closes December 15.*

**Architecture of Jean Nouvel.** *Storefront for Art and Architecture, 97 Kenmare St. 431-5795. Closes December 30.*

"The developments in inmate health care directly parallel what's happening on the outside," Nadel said. "Managed care is taking hold. Hospitals are buying up others and setting up their own referral networks; prisons have been doing this, too."

Nadel developed a strategic plan that provides regional medical facilities to serve inmates in 70 state prisons, as part of a \$350 million program. When prisoners require acute care, they go to hospitals owned, operated, and staffed by the prison system, instead of to local hospitals that might not have the security and staff required to handle special inmate patient needs. Regionalization will enable the Department of Correctional Services to combine activities and provide for a larger inmate population more economically.

Amid this restructuring is a widening interest in privatization, to lift some of the financial burden from cities and states. "New Jersey has been heading this way," Nadel said, and although the strength of the unions could make it difficult in New York, Mayor Guiliani wants to explore that option for city jails.

According to the National Institute of Corrections, each year upwards of 40 new state prisons are approved. But in a new trend in corrections, states are requesting proposals from groups that can design, build, operate, and finance the facilities. The lead will not be the architect, she said. "Companies will come in with their own architects as part of a package that includes, at times, staff and management."

The prison business may be a sure thing for architects in a nation whose only universal health plan is for citizens behind bars.

**Making the City Intelligible**

*by Jayne Merkel*

**N**ew York City is a big place — but the whole world? Sharon Vatsky, the curator of education at the Queens Museum of Art, told a group of New York City teachers and AIA members that when people come to see the gigantic panorama of the city created for the 1964 New York World's Fair, "some people think they are looking at a map of the whole world. Some people think it's a map of New York State." At a recent Learning By Design Committee panel entitled "Making New York City Intelligible," chaired by the National Museum of Design's Susan Yelovich, Vatsky described the 272-panel map, which took three years to build and contains 865,000 miniature buildings. Andrew Volkert, John Tauranac, and Michael Kwartler, FAIA, discussed other ways of trying to explain the enormously complex physical entity our city is.

One way to do it is to break the city down into intelligible components like buildings, streets, and neighborhoods. Vatsky said that when the mayor came to visit the new glass-floored installation by Rafael Vinoly, FAIA, he looked for the place where he lives. It's a universal response. When people come, they all want to see their own places, the neighborhoods where they grew up.

"The only other way to see the city this way is by helicopter," Vatsky said of the one-inch to 100-foot scale model.

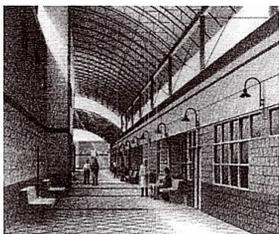
Dolkart, an architectural historian, preservation consultant, and Columbia professor, has an even more hands-on — or rather feet-on — approach. He leads walking tours of New York neighborhoods. Using slides at the panel, he took the audience on an armchair tour

of the Lower East Side, posing the kinds of questions that peak the curiosity of his students: "Why did rich people in the nineteenth century live in the middle of the city rather than on the waterfronts? Why does New York have water towers on the buildings? Why is there so much ornamental detail on tenements built for poor immigrants?"

Tauranac, an architectural historian, writer, and cartographer, demonstrated the level of abstraction involved in explaining the city with an illustrated history of New York subway maps, including the award-winning 1979 version and multilingual rider-friendly one he designed for the Metropolitan Transit Authority. "Manhattan has a certain Cartesian regularity to it," he said, but still, "the maps fudge reality" to make it simple enough to understand. Some maps, however, fudge more than others. Eliot Willensky's 1958 subway map straightened out many curved streets and changed the color of the water from blue to white in the interest of aesthetics. Massimo Vignelli's, based on the appealing London Underground map, went even further, turning all streets into parallel, perpendicular, or diagonal lines, so that the 50th Street station showed up north of 57th Street.

It became obvious why Kwartler, who tries to describe everything man has built above ground, employs several high-tech devices at the New School's Environmental Simulation Center. But he uses low-tech ones, too, like the cardboard model of central Yonkers with photographs of some building facades pasted on, a proven planning tool for neighborhood groups. He also showed movie-like electronically simulated walk-throughs of various parts of the city, computerized projections that let

*continued on page 18*



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## CONTINUING EXHIBITIONS

continued from page 16

**New York Now: Contemporary Cityscape Paintings.** Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 103rd St. 534-1672. Closes December 31.

**Light Construction.** The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. 708-9400. Closes January 2.

**Celebrating Buckminster Fuller: Contemporary Developments in Design Science.** The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 122th St. 316-7498. Closes January 5.

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

**In Three Dimensions: Women Sculptors of the 1990s.** Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 1000 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island. 718-448-2500. Closes January 14.

**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.

**City Speculations.** Queens Museum of Art, New York City Building, Flushing Meadows, Corona Park. 718-592-9700. Closes March 10.

## DEADLINES

### 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.

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people see what a block would look like with different configurations of buildings, and the elaborate multidimensional computer model of Lower Manhattan.

Kwartler's historical survey of representation included Leonardo da Vinci's aerial map made from imagination, Canaletto's carefully observed paintings of St. Mark's Square, and the model of Constantine's Rome that Benito Mussolini commissioned. Though he explained that the purpose of his center's work is to develop tools to do city planning more knowledgeably, he fascinated the audience with the imaginative potential of "making New York City intelligible."

#### Remembering



**Ralph Pomerance,**  
**Architect of Riis**  
**Houses Plaza and**  
**Medical Buildings**

A founder of Pomerance & Breines, a firm that designed more than 400 buildings over 60 years, Ralph Pomerance, FAIA, died at his home in Manhattan in August at the age of 87.

Pomerance & Breines was best known for its medical residence buildings and classic modern houses with flat roofs, large plate-glass windows, and open plans. Pomerance's own house in Cos Cob, Connecticut, was one of the best known examples. Another noteworthy project was the Swedish Pavilion at the 1939 New York World's Fair, on which he collaborated with Sven Markelius.

Pomerance & Breines designed the Baum-Rothschild Staff Pavilion at the Mt. Sinai Medical Center, the Abraham Jacobi and Nathan B. Van Etten hospitals at the Bronx Municipal Hospital Center, the

Max and Evelynne Low Residence Complex and the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Center for Research in Mental Retardation and Human Development at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and NYU Medical School housing on First Avenue.

Perhaps its greatest success was the Riis Houses Plaza on the Lower East Side, with M. Paul Friedberg. Unlike most outdoor space for public housing, it is construction to delight all ages: pyramids to climb on for the small, an amphitheater that accommodates all age groups, places to sit, stand, walk, talk, hop, skip, scoot, and tag....Riis is where the action is in these parts, these days. A great place," according to Elliot Willensky and Norval White's *AIA Guide to New York City*.

A former chairman of the Greenwich, Connecticut, Housing Authority, Ralph Pomerance was born in Manhattan, graduated from the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, and opened his own office in 1933. Two years later he formed the partnership with Simon Breines, which continued until both architects retired in 1993.

The architect and historian James Marston Fitch noted that when they retired two years ago, Pomerance & Breines was the oldest continuing architectural partnership in the city that had the original partners at the helm. Pomerance's partner, Simon Breines, said, "Now it's up to some other firm to break our record."

Ralph Pomerance is survived by his wife, Marilyn, a daughter, two sons, a stepson and stepdaughter, four grandchildren, and six stepgrandchildren.

#### Jolie Hammer Kinsolving

Many New York architects and planners mourn the passing of Jolie Hammer Kinsolving, who served as Deputy Borough President of Manhattan under Percy Sutton and policy assistant to Robert F. Wagner, Jr., when he was chairman of the City Planning Commission and Deputy Mayor to Ed Koch. She died August 7 at Mt. Sinai Hospital of cancer at 62.

A daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Brockman, she was born in Manhattan Beach, Brooklyn, and attended Midwood High School and Brandeis University, graduating in 1954. Later, she received a teaching certificate from Hunter College. She married textile executive Gordon Hammer in 1961. They were divorced in 1992. The next year she married retired media executive Charles M. Kinsolving, Jr.

At her request, there was no religious service, but Mr. Kinsolving is starting "the Jolie Fund" in her memory to support scholarships and internships for women who want to enter government service in New York City.

#### Women in Architecture Exhibit

The Women in Architecture Committee and Wilkahn, Inc., will host an informal evening in January to share work done by women in architecture and related fields. The committee extends an open invitation for architects to contribute slides illustrating these projects. For participation guidelines, fax a request with name, address, and phone number to 861-1918, or leave information on that answering machine.

#### Join Us at the Heritage Ball

It's not too late to buy tickets for the New York Chapter's annual Heritage Ball on Monday, November 13, at the

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University Club. Philip Johnson, FAIA, will receive the 1995 President's Award, and Chapter members and friends will dance to music provided by the Steve Leeds Orchestra. For more information, call 683-0023, ext. 15.

#### Nominations Meeting

A open Chapter meeting will take place Tuesday, November 21 at 6:00 pm at Chapter headquarters to create a ballot for the nominating committee election. We will also be showing the award-winning AIA video on antitrust, *Legal Hardhat Required*. At this meeting, nominations will be taken only from those members in attendance. If you have someone in mind for this committee, you must attend this meeting to put your candidate on the ballot. Ballots will be mailed to all voting members. Since Chapter bylaws state that a minimum of 100 members constitute a quorum for this meeting, it is important that members who cannot attend return their proxies before November 21. Members elected to the Nominating Committee convene in January and select the slate of officers for the following year, which will be announced at the annual meeting in June.

#### AIA Grants: Who Has One and How to Win One

The Scholarship Committee is sponsoring a discussion of how scholarship and grant submissions are judged. Several past winners will give short presentations at the event on Wednesday, November 15, at 6:00 pm in the eleventh floor gallery space at AIA Headquarters, 200 Lexington Avenue. The cost for members is \$5, for nonmembers, \$10, and it is free for students with I.D. RSVP at 683-0023, ext. 21.

#### New Publication for ARE

One of the bibles of study aids for the Architect Registration Exams (ARE), the *Architectural Exam Review, Volume II: Nonstructural Topics*, was reissued in a third edition in October by Professional Publications. Authored by David Kent Ballast, AIA, sections covering Division A (pre-design), Division B (site design), Division C (building design), Division G (mechanical, plumbing, electrical, and acoustic systems), Division H (materials and methods), and Division I (construction documents and services) have all been revised to reflect the content of the current ARE. A new chapter on barrier-free design, including ADA compliance, has been added, and the book has been updated to reflect the 1994 Uniform Building Code. Priced at \$39.95, it is available at many architectural bookstores, or it can be ordered directly from

the publisher by sending a check to Professional Publications, Inc., 1250 Fifth Ave., Belmont, CA 94002.

#### Sverdrup Expands

Acquisition begets synergy. Sverdrup Facilities, Inc., one of the country's largest engineering, architectural, and construction management companies, acquired GPR Planners Collaborative, a 30-person research and development facility consulting office with headquarters in White Plains, in August. The purchase of GPR formalizes a long-term professional alliance between the two firms. GPR will continue to function under its own name as a subsidiary of Sverdrup.

#### Rizzoli Bookstores' Top 10

As of September 30, 1995

1. **House of the Architect**, Anaxta Zabalbeascoa (Rizzoli, cloth, \$50.00).
2. **The New American House**, Oscar Rie Ojeda (Watson/Guptill, cloth, \$55.00).
3. **Anyplace**, Cynthia C. Davidson (MIT Press, paper, \$35.00).
4. **Asymptote: Architecture at the Interval**, Hani Rashid and Lise Anne Couture (Rizzoli, paper, \$30.00).
5. **Reaching for the Skies**, *Architectural Design Profile No. 116* (Academy, paper, \$26.95).
6. **Flesh: Architectural Probes**, Elizabeth Diller and Richard Scofidio (Princeton Architectural Press, paper, \$34.95).
7. **Havana/La Habana**, Nancy Stout and Jorge Rigau (Rizzoli, cloth, \$45.00).
8. **Architecture of a Jumping Universe**, Charles Jencks (Academy Editions, paper, \$30.00).
9. **Mutant Materials in Contemporary Design**, Paolo Antonelli (MoMA, paper, \$24.95).
10. **New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism Between the Two World Wars**, Robert A. M. Stern et al. (Rizzoli, paper, \$49.50).

#### Urban Center Books' Top 10

As of September 25, 1995

1. **Kiasma: Working Process**, Steven Holl Architects, Molly Blüden (Steven Holl Architects/Architectural League of New York, paper, \$6.50).
2. **Delirious New York**, Rem Koolhaas (Monacelli, paper, \$35.00).
3. **Reclaiming Our Past: Honoring Our Ancestors**, Edward Kaufman (The Municipal Art Society, paper, \$19.95).
4. **Shaping the City: New York and the Municipal Art Society**, Gregory Gilmartin (Potter, cloth, \$35.00).
5. **City of Bits**, William J. Mitchell (MIT Press, cloth, \$20.00).
6. **Flesh: Architectural Probes**, Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio (Princeton Architectural Press, paper, \$34.95).
7. **Asymptote: Architecture at the Interval**, Hani Rashid and Lise Anne Couture (Rizzoli, paper, \$30.00).
8. **Power of Place**, Dolores Hayden (MIT Press, cloth, \$30.00).
9. **Richard Meier**, Philip Jodidio (Taschen, paper, \$24.99).
10. **Herzog/DeMeuron**, *El Croquis 60* (El Croquis, cloth, \$45.00).



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**6**

Monday

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT**

**Symposium: Preservation Issues and Historic Districts**

Given by Franny Eberhardt.  
Sponsored by the AIA  
New York Chapter Historic  
Buildings Committee. 6:00 pm.  
200 Lexington Ave. 683-0023, ext. 21.

**7**

Tuesday

**Lecture: Ely Jacques Kahn,  
New York Architect**

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

**Lecture: Michael Graves, FAIA**

Given by Michael Graves, FAIA.  
Sponsored by Urban Center Books.  
6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457  
Madison Ave. 935-3595. \$7.

**8**

Wednesday

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENTS  
CONSTRUCTION Construction**

Cosponsored by the Society of  
Design Administration NY Chapter  
and the Decoration and Design  
Building. 4:00-10:00 pm. The D&D  
Building, 979 Third Ave. 759-7008.

**Reception: The Best of New York  
AIA Interiors in the '90s**

Sponsored by the Interiors  
Committee. 5:30 pm. The American  
Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.  
230-3235. \$25.

**Lecture: Critical Architecture  
in a Geopolitical World**

Given by Peter Eisenman, FAIA.  
Sponsored by the Columbia  
University GSAPP. 6:30 pm. Wood  
Auditorium, Avery Hall. 854-3510.

**Lecture: Viva Las Vegas**

Given by Alan Hess. Sponsored by  
the Cooper-Hewitt National Design  
Museum. 6:30 pm. 2 E. 91st St.  
860-6321. \$15.

**9**

Thursday

**Event: Buckminster Fuller's  
100th Birthday Memorial**

Lecture by William McDonough.  
Sponsored by Cathedral of  
St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave.  
at 112th St. 8:00 pm.  
316-7493. No charge.

**Lecture: Wrapped Reichstag,  
Berlin, 1971-1995 and  
Works in Progress**

Given by Christo and Jeanne-Claude.  
Sponsored by the Architectural  
League. 6:30 pm. Caspary Hall,  
Rockefeller University,  
1230 York Ave. 735-1722. \$7.

**10**

Friday

**Exhibition: Constructions**

Sponsored by the AIA New York  
Chapter, the SDA NY Chapter, and  
the D&D Building. The D&D  
Building, 979 Third Ave. 759-7008.  
Closes November 16.

**Lecture: Marfa, Texas,  
Don Judd's Place of Architecture**

Given by Lauretta Vinciarelli.  
Response by Silvia Kolbowski.  
Sponsored by the Temple Hoyne Buell  
Center for the Study of American  
Architecture. 12:30 pm. Wood  
Auditorium, Avery Hall, Columbia  
University. 854-2127.

**Lecture: Mysterious Mexico**

Given by Ricardo Legoretta.  
Sponsored by the New York School  
of Interior Design. 6:00 pm.  
170 E. 70th St. 472-1500.

**11**

Saturday

**Lecture: Remembering the  
World of Tomorrow, Links Between  
the 1964 and 1939 World's Fairs**

Given by Dr. Marc H. Miller.  
Sponsored by the Flushing Council  
on Culture and the Art Flushing  
Town Hall. 2:00 pm. Flushing  
Town Hall, 137-35 Northern BL.,  
Flushing. 718-463-7700. \$3.

**13**

Monday

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT  
Heritage Ball**

Honoring Philip Johnson, FAIA.  
7:00 pm. The University Club,  
1 W. 54th St. 683-0023, ext. 15.

**14**

Tuesday

**Panel: (Four out of)**

**Five Architects, Reunion Evening**

Discussion with Peter Eisenman,  
FAIA, Michael Graves, FAIA,  
Charles Gwathmey, FAIA, and  
Richard Meier, FAIA. Sponsored by  
Urban Center Books. 6:30 pm.  
The New York Palace Hotel,  
457 Madison Ave. 935-3595. \$10.

**15**

Wednesday

**Panel: Defining the Civic Center –  
Debating Its Future**

Moderated by Kenneth T. Jackson.  
Panelists include Carl Weisbrod  
and William Diamond. Sponsored  
by the Municipal Art Society Fellows.  
6:00 pm. The Urban Center,  
457 Madison Ave. 935-3960. \$5.

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT  
AIA Grants, Who Has One  
and How to Win One**

Sponsored by the Scholarship  
Committee. 6:00 pm. For location, call  
683-0023, ext. 15. \$5 (\$10 nonmem-  
bers, free for students with ID).

**16**

Thursday

**Film and Panel: Peter Eisenman,  
Making Architecture Move**

Cosponsored by the Architectural  
League and the Museum of  
Television and Radio. 6:30 pm.  
Museum of Television and Radio,  
25 W. 52nd St. 621-6600. \$8.

**Panel: Re-Visioning Design and  
Technology, Feminist Perspectives  
for a Changing World**

Panelists include Susana Torre,  
Anne Balsamo, Leslie Kanes Weisman.  
Sponsored by the Center for Human  
Environments, Graduate School and  
University Center, CUNY. 8:00 pm.  
Harold M. Proshansky Auditorium,  
33 W. 42nd St. 642-2962.

**18**

Saturday

**Exhibition: Architecture of Jean Nouvel**  
Storefront for Art and Architecture,  
97 Kenmare St. 431-5795. Closes  
December 30.

**20**

Monday

**Panel: City Speculations,  
A Discussion of Urban Propositions  
on Movement and Change**

Moderated by Patricia Phillips with  
Wellington Reiter, Mark Robbins,  
Ricardo Scofidio, and Mierle  
Laderman Ukeles. Sponsored  
by Parsons School of Design.  
6:30 pm. Swayduck Auditorium,  
65 Fifth Ave. 229-8955.

**21**

Tuesday

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT  
Nominating Meeting**

All members are encouraged to  
attend. 6:00 pm. 200 Lexington Ave.,  
sixteenth floor. 683-0023, ext. 21.

**28**

Tuesday

**Lecture: Remaking Newark**

Given by AIA Chapter president  
Marilyn Jordan Taylor, AIA.  
Sponsored by the Cooper-Hewitt  
National Design Museum. 6:30 pm.  
2 E. 91st St. 860-6321. \$15.

**29**

Wednesday

**Panel: Reassessing Robert Moses**

Given by Marshall Berman. Panelists  
include David Perry, William Ayres,  
Alison Cornish, Patricia C. Phillips,  
and Mierle Laderman Ukeles.  
Cosponsored by the Queens Museum  
of Art and the Museum at Stony  
Brook. 7:00 pm. Paine Webber Art  
Gallery. 1285 Ave. of the Americas,  
38th floor. 713-2885.

**Lecture: Agoraphobia**

Given by Rosalyn Deutsche.  
Sponsored by the Buell Center  
and Columbia University GSAPP.  
6:30 pm. Wood Auditorium,  
Avery Hall. 854-8165.

**December**

**5**

Tuesday

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT  
Inauguration and**

**Design Awards Presentation**  
6:00 pm. The Seagram Building,  
375 Park Avenue. RSVP 683-0023,  
ext. 21. \$5 (\$10, nonmembers).

AIA New York Chapter  
The Founding Chapter of  
the American Institute of Architects  
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New York, NY 10016

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