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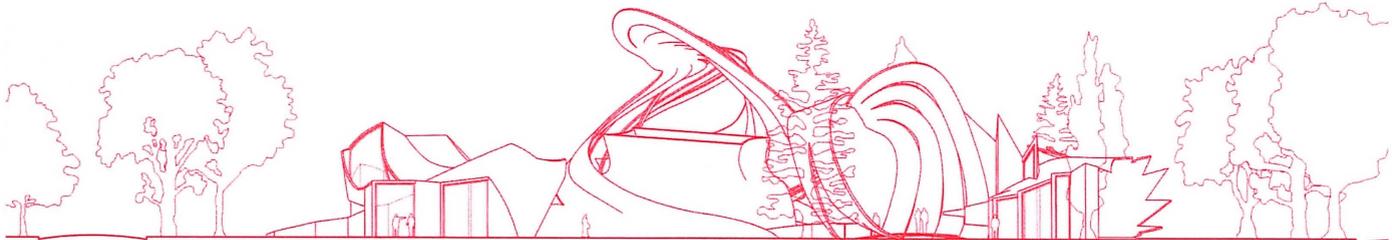
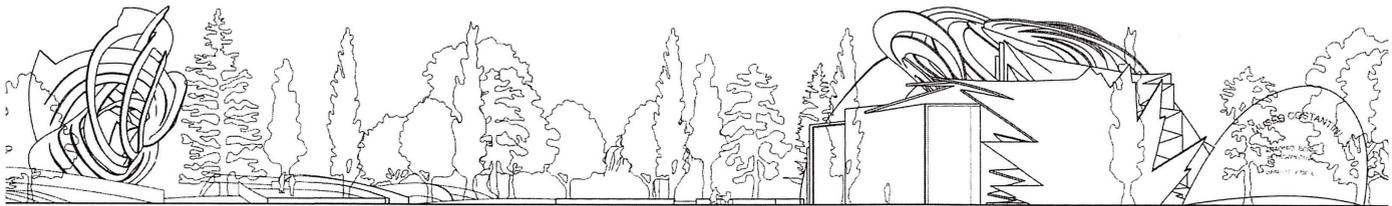
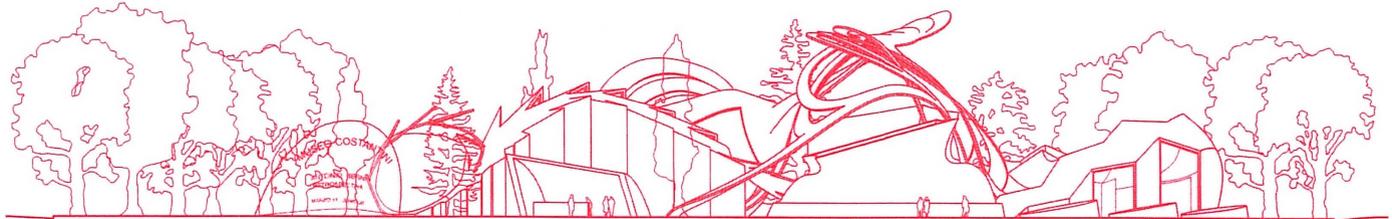
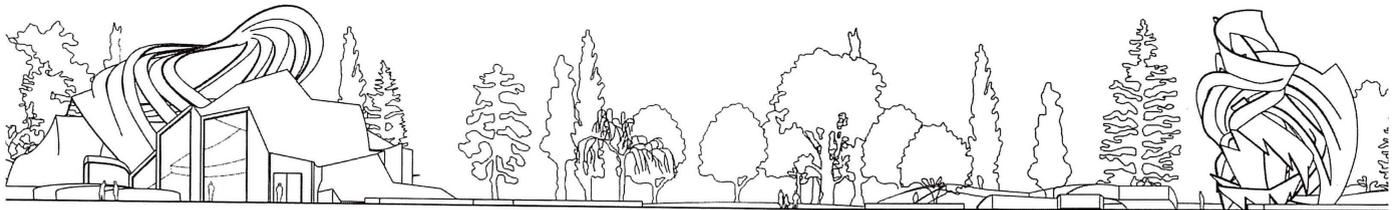
THE

AGE

OF THE

MUSEUM

Competition scheme for the **Costantini Museum** in Buenos Aires by Frank Stella and Robert Kahn



Volume 60, Number 6, February 1998

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## NEWS FROM THE AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CAROL CLARK



The exhibition "Civics Lessons," currently on display in our nation's capital (see pages 17-19), fits in nicely with the goals of the new executive vice president of the American Institute of Architects, Mark W. Hurwitz, who intends to make the AIA a more effective advocate for the profession. He is seeking to strengthen the AIA's

advocacy role on Capitol Hill and at the agency level. Early this year, Chapter leaders welcomed him and declared their support for these objectives. And at the annual Grassroots meeting in Washington, D.C., this month, Chapter representatives and their colleagues from across the country met with members of Congress and the United States Senate and their staffs to discuss legislative priorities.

Among the major issues under discussion were federal funding for school construction, an increase in the tax-exempt bond cap to stimulate private sector participation in the development of affordable housing, and reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Each of these initiatives is being monitored by architects from the AIA New York Chapter, who recognize their potential effect on architectural practices.

Under the leadership of Representative Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) and Senator Carol Moseley-Braun (D-Ill.), a bill entitled the Partnership to Rebuild America's Schools Act of 1998 has been introduced in both the House and the Senate. The measures propose a buy-down of interest rates on school construction bonds issued by states and localities. President Clinton has been citing this priority in his State of the Union addresses, but legislation needs to be passed to establish cooperative funding by the federal government and local school districts to improve the condition of schools nationwide.

In response to calls originating from the AIA New York Chapter's Housing Committee, the Institute established an Affordable Housing Task Force, which issued a report on its 1997 activities to the Board of Directors. Chief among its myriad recommendations was strong support for the bipartisan legislation already introduced in the House and Senate. If passed, that legislation will increase the tax-exempt bond cap from \$50 to \$75 per person and from a \$150 million maximum to \$250 million, with future indexing tied to inflation. Passage of this legislation would significantly increase funding for affordable housing construction in every state. Since the nation's supply of affordable, unsubsidized housing units has eroded over the past 20 years, legislation to increase the private sector's role in this area could yield significant results.

*Oculus* readers know how vitally important reauthorization of the ISTEA bill is to the New York region, as it provides critical funding for highway and bridge construction, mass transit, and other projects. The original legislation expired last fall, when the President signed a short-term extension to keep funds flowing. This month, the Senate is scheduled to take up ISTEA II, a six-year, \$180.7 billion measure that the Chapter strongly supports. If you are interested in taking part in any of this advocacy, contact us at by e-mail at aiany@way.com.

**Getaways by Women Architects**

by Nina Rappaport

Three houses under way now in the New York area take their cues from spectacular sites. One, designed by **Karen Van Lengen Architects** in collaboration with the **Stein Partnership**, bends along the ridge of the sloping waterfront site of the old Bell Estate in Amagansett. A long, linear bar where the living and dining areas, kitchen, and porch are located is set into the topography, affording views all around. A large interior stair hall, defined by penetrating stone walls, divides the main living space and connects it to an art studio and outdoor terraces on a lower level. A second, slightly rotated volume houses bedrooms above a garage, with a master bedroom suite on top overlooking Gardiner's Island. The main roof ridge twists, growing in section and shifting in plan, as it folds the house inward like the shifting bluffs of the dune landscape. The 3,500-square-foot house is expected to begin construction in the fall.

□ Jody Saylor of **Saylor & Alexandrakis Architects** has designed a modern but contextual weekend house on a hill at the end of a Hudson River village street. The roof pitches, clapboard siding, trim, window sizes, and buildable site perimeters were dictated by historic district guidelines, but the L-shaped, 2,850-square-foot house features a long, tall living-and-dining pavilion with glass doors that maximize views and make it feel like an indoor porch. A deck cut into the high ceilings of the living room looks out on the southwest sunsets behind Storm King Mountain. An art studio with

its own northeast-facing porch doubles as a guest room. The "L" encloses a garden on one side, making it a see-through house. The house steps up to 35 feet at the corner of the "L," recalling nearby Victorian towers with its windowed bedroom and private roof deck. The project should be completed this summer.

□ On an undersized lot on Moriches Bay in Remsenburg, Southampton, **Françoise Bollack Architects** designed a 2,000-square-foot retreat on the site of an earlier house that measured only 26 by 38 feet. Cedar clapboard Dolly Varden siding wraps around the structure's self-contained, boat-like wood frame. Raised on piles because it is located in a flood plain, it has garage space underneath the first floor, where an open plan is penetrated by a stairway, fireplace, and curvilinear yellow plywood screen separating the kitchen. An arch-shaped open balcony off the second floor cantilevers over the first. The two bedrooms in the front have a bowed window on the facade; the two in the back have a crow's-nest balcony projecting out from the corner to capture views. The wood-shingled roof pitches forward in front and curves in a hip at the back, with nautical compactness.

**In a More Public Realm**

**Thomas Pfifer and Partners**, a firm now a year and a half old, has received three new commissions, which are all in the schematic design phase. It was awarded the new U.S. Courthouse in Salt Lake City in a GSA Design Excellence Program competition over **Gwathmey Siegel & Associates, Barton Myers, and Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates.** The \$70 million project — a 260,000-square-foot, four-story

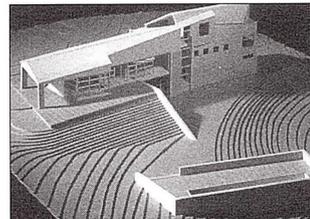
building — will be constructed in time for the Winter Olympics of 2002.

The firm is also designing a 35-story tower at 33 Arch Street in Boston for Kingston Investors. The 530,000-square-foot office building is expected to be completed in 2001. And in Columbia County, Pfifer is doing a 5,000-square-foot house for Andrea and Moyra Botta.

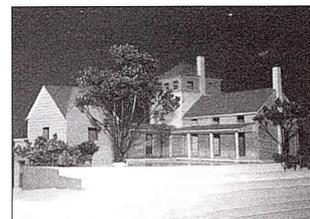
□ The black hole in the Ladies' Mile historic district — the surface parking lot at the corner of 23rd Street and Sixth Avenue — is about to be replaced with a 20-story, 450,000-square-foot apartment building with 70,000 square feet of commercial space, in a pastiche of forms and materials inspired by details from the surrounding historic department stores.

The design, by **Richard Cook & Associates Architects** with **Costas Kondylis & Associates**, culminates in a 20-story tower on the north facade, which steps down to ten stories on the south. It was approved by the Landmarks Commission in November. A replica of a bust of William Shakespeare from the 1869 Edwin Booth Theater, which was discovered by researchers Higgins and Quasebarth in the NYU archives, will be installed on the new facade (as the original was on the James McCreery & Company dry goods store, which was razed in 1975). Along with other proposed apartments in its commercial zone, the building at 56 West 23rd Street awaits approval from Community Board 5 and the Planning Commission.

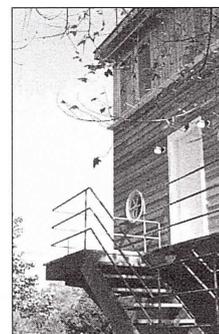
□ The gigantic new women's Salvatore Ferragamo store at 663 Fifth Avenue — over 12,000 square feet — is one



*Amagansett residence, Karen Van Lengen Architects and the Stein Partnership*



*Hudson River village house, Saylor & Alexandrakis Architects*



*Beach house, Remsenburg, Françoise Bollack Architects*



*56 West 23rd Street, Richard Cook & Associates and Costas Kondylis & Associates*



*William Shakespeare bust incorporated into facade, 56 West 23rd Street, Richard Cook & Associates*

Françoise Bollack

Jack Pottler/Esco

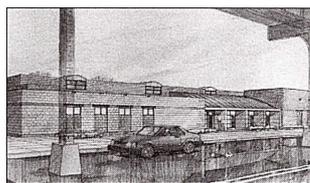
Christopher Neville/Higgins & Quasebarth

of a series of six recent shops created for the Italian designer by **Kenne Shepherd Interior Design Architecture** of New York with **Roberto Monsani** of Florence. Others include the 4,790-square-foot men's store in Trump Tower and a much smaller shop in Bal Harbour, Florida, which opened in December. The stores use cool, neutral tones of beige and black, Italian ceramic tile, custom lacquer with nickel trim, soft leather seating, and other luxurious materials in clean, open space with fluid circulation and modulated lighting.



Toshi Yoshimi

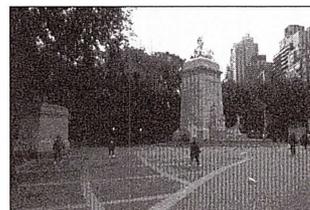
*Ferragamo store, New York, Kenne Shepherd and Roberto Monsani*



*The Nephrology Foundation of Brooklyn, Larsen Shein Ginsberg + Partners*



*Federal Plaza, Martha Schwartz*



*Merchant's Gate plaza, Central Park, Martha Schwartz*

Kenne Shepherd was also the New York architect for British designer **John Pawson's** Calvin Klein Madison Avenue shop last year.

□ On a heavier note, **Larsen Shein Ginsberg + Partners** has broken ground on a 17,000-square-foot unit for the Nephrology Foundation of Brooklyn at 1845 McDonald Avenue. The \$3.4 million center includes a primary dialysis treatment area in a skylighted atrium with high ceilings. A vaulted ceiling entrance area leads to support and administrative offices; 30 dialysis stations are situated in comfortable rooms. The one-story facility with usable underground space will have a light, polished concrete brick exterior with a brightly colored standing-seam metal roof over the entrance. It will open in the summer.

### Upcoming Exhibitions

Defying the constraints of place and time, a three-part exhibition, "Fabrications," will take place simultaneously at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Wexner Center for the Arts at the Ohio State University, from

January 29 through April 28. The show will feature twelve full-scale architectural constructions — four at each museum — exploring tectonic issues. At the MoMA site, "Fabrications: The Tectonic Garden" includes installations by the architects Alfred Munkenbeck of **Munkenbeck + Marshall Architects**; Enrique Norten of **TEN Arquitectos**; Monica Ponce de Leon and Nader Tehrani of **Office dA**; and Henry Smith-Miller and Laurie Hawkinson of **Smith-Miller + Hawkinson** in the Rockefeller Sculpture Garden.

The Museum of Modern Art is also holding a comprehensive large-scale retrospective, "Alvar Aalto: Between Humanism and Materialism," from February 19 to May 19, with 175 original drawings, 15 models, and materials from the Alvar Aalto Foundation and private collections. Full-scale models and video installations will create an approximation of the experience of Aalto's buildings. The show was organized by Peter Reed, associate curator in the department of architecture and design, with Kenneth Frampton as curatorial consultant, assisted by Elina Standertskjold of the Museum of Finnish Architecture.

The first New York exhibition of the work of the Miami-based firm, **Arquitectonica**, will be held at the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum from February 17 through May 10. Featuring the zesty firm's design for the hotel complex at the corner of 42nd Street and Eighth Avenue — with a light shooting from the top like a meteor and a postcard wall at the base with images of iconic New York buildings — the show will place it in the con-

text of the architects' work and the revival of the Times Square area.

### Awards and Appointments

Chelsea Piers, designed by **Butler Rogers Baskett**, received the Urban Land Institute's 1997 Award for Excellence. The award recognizes successful real estate development projects, which are financially viable, use land resourcefully, have relevance to contemporary issues, and are sensitive to the community and the environment.

The Parks Council has awarded **Martha Schwartz** the 1997 Philip N. Winslow Landscape Design Award for the redesign of Federal Plaza, where Richard Serra's sculpture, *Tilted Arc*, was originally located. New York City park benches, placed back-to-back and painted bright green, spiral around mounds of grass, which produce mist on hot days. Granite ovate bollards protect the plaza from cars, and drinking fountains painted bright blue create an inviting new public space. The reconstruction of the Merchant's Gate entrance to Central Park at Columbus Circle also received a special commendation. The restoration of the monument and the design of pedestrian areas and public spaces, which create an inviting passage into the park from the traffic circle, were completed by the Central Park Conservancy's design team.

□ **Milo River** has been appointed the new president of the New York City School Construction Authority, replacing outgoing president **Martin Raab**, who resigned at the end of the year.

## A Recycling Factory for the South Bronx

by Nina Rappaport

**A**n enormous, innovative, energy-saving industrial facility — the Bronx Community Paper Company, proposed for a 26-acre site in the Harlem River Rail Yard, a “brownfield” near the Triborough Bridge in a Federal Empowerment Zone — is being exhibited at the Municipal Art Society until February 6. Designed by **Maya Lin** and HLW’s **Chris Choa**, the plant was planned by a partnership of the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association, and several government agencies in a model of public-private cooperation. Construction will begin late this year, when negotiations with the recycling company that will operate the factory are completed.

The project was initiated in 1992 to create a profit-making, job-producing community investment in an ecologically-sound facility that would recycle about 300,000 tons of waste paper per year — 25 percent of New York’s paper waste. The plant will improve the environment in numerous ways: It will save more than 3.4 million trees a year in the U.S. and Canada; by using gray water from a sewage treatment plant, it will save three million gallons of fresh water a day; and it will reduce the city’s waste at the Fresh Kills Landfill. The \$370 million plant will turn paper trash into clean rolls of newsprint; companies such as *The New York Times* are potential customers. Still, a few skeptical neighborhood residents have expressed concern about emissions.



HLW International LLP/© Media

*Proposed Bronx Community Paper Company, Maya Lin and Chris Choa of HLW*

In 1993 Maya Lin was invited to work with the team, which now includes HLW International as project architects, the Harris Group as project engineers, and Morse Diesel International as construction manager and design builders.

She is adding sculptural elements that reveal how the facility works in the four-building complex. At the main entrance, a water wall (a transparent holding tank) exposes the water, which is brought in to clean and process the waste paper. Then a green wall (a metal trellis) greets the visitor. In the back, Lin is stenciling cloud images on a 200-foot-high steam tower to cool the natural gas boilers, and she has created a text wall with plant data and output information. The plant’s basic steel shell, which has corrugated aluminum walls in a horizontal form, speaks to the flow of the recycling processes. The main volume of the building is punctuated by transparent openings at building connections and material transfer points in the recycling process, so that the flow of the process is visible to visitors and motorists on the bridge.

These skylights and clerestory windows bring natural light to the workers, like the humane recycling plants Lin visited in France. “My interventions,” she said, “both added design elements and kept the costs down without tampering with the finely-tuned machinery inside.”

The waste paper will arrive by trucks on trains to be stored in a 100,000-square-foot building on one side of the bridge. It will be de-inked in a 53,000-square-foot building, and then it will be filtered, bleached, and turned into pulp. A pipe suspended in a metal truss utility bridge, linking the site under the Triborough Bridge, will bring the slurry to the 110,000-square-foot paper-making machine building. The paper pulp will then be processed, made into new sheets of paper, and transferred in rolls to a finishing machine, which wraps and prepares them for shipping from the 86,000-square-foot paper storage area.

To make the plant a part of the landscape, the way European factories often are today, Lin set up the truck

bays so that there is easy access to the site from under the bridge, out of view. She designed a landscape scheme that follows the grid of the building’s interior columns, with trees planted on the grid like a thick forest visible to workers inside.

At the opening of “Designing an Industrial Ecology” at the Municipal Art Society, Lin explained her interest in making the factory a humane environment. She said she had been asked by the planners, “What will you do — design the colors and the offices?” She said she hopes that she has done more than just paint the offices blue.

The recycling plant is intended to reveal a process to urbanites who have no concept of where trash goes and where goods come from. In the process she showed that industrial buildings are amenable to serious design.

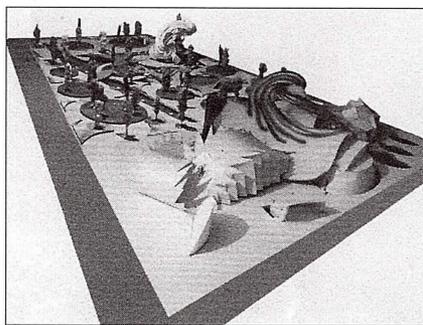
# The Age of the Museum

by Jayne Merkel

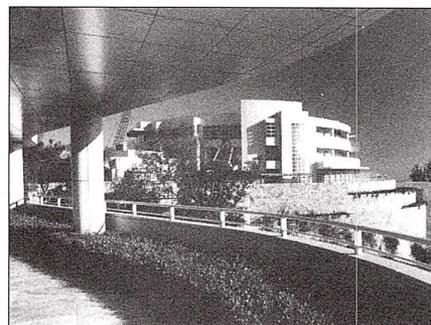
**M**ore ink has been spilled on museums in recent months than on all other building types combined. And though the real story is that new museums of all types are being created every day (600 new art museums since 1970 in the United States alone) and existing ones keep expanding, even as funding for the arts dwindles, attention has focused mostly on the openings of the Getty Center, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, and the selection of an architect for the Museum of Modern Art addition. One reason is that art museums — which are unusually sophisticated clients, willing to take risks and pay for aesthetic ventures — produce more masterpieces than any other kind of institution. Another is that, since they are open to the public and apt to be influential, we feel we have a stake in their design.

Museum commissions correlate uncannily with architects' reputations. Consider **Frank Lloyd Wright** after the Guggenheim, **Louis I. Kahn** after the Kimball, **I. M. Pei** after the Louvre, **James Ingo Freed** after the Holocaust Museum, and **Frank Gehry** after Bilbao. The correlation applies up and down the spectrum of receptions museums receive. The architect is even linked with the character of the museum, as **Daniel Libeskind** is with the Jewish Museum in Berlin, **Peter Eisenman** is with the Wexner Center, **Richard Gluckman** is with Dia, **Gwathmey Siegel** is with the Guggenheim extension, and **Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo** is with the Met. It is hard to think of an architect of major status in the second half of the twentieth century who has not built a museum.

Even being seriously considered for



*Constantini Museum competition scheme,  
Frank Stella and Robert Kahn*



*The Getty Center, Los Angeles, Richard Meier*

a major museum commission is a career booster. Several of the semifinalists for the Museum of Modern Art expansion, which was awarded to **Yoshio Taniguchi** last month, have already received other museum jobs. **Tod Williams Billie Tsien and Associates** won the American Museum of Folk Art commission on the same West 53rd Street block before MoMA finalists were even chosen. **Steven Holl Architects**, completing the Museum of Modern Art in Helsinki and the addition to the Cranbrook Museum of Science, was commissioned to design the Bellevue Art Museum in the fall (*Oculus*, November 1995, p. 5; November 1997, p. 3; January 1998, p. 5). Three days after the winner was announced, finalist **Bernard Tschumi** became a finalist again when the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati chose him, **Daniel Libeskind** and **Zaha Hadid** from a star-laden semifinal field of twelve (*Oculus*, December 1997, p. 3).

But it's never over till it's over, and sometimes not even then. Who would have thought, when **Cesar Pelli** got the commission for the last Museum of Modern Art expansion 20 years ago, that the museum would be ready to grow again by the end of the century, that **Philip Johnson** would be back as a force to be reckoned with, and his earlier additions, which were hacked away at the edges in the late 1970s, would be considered sacrosanct, while Pelli's atrium became a target for demolition. Certainly nobody could have guessed that Taniguchi would be the architect. Hardly anyone in America had ever heard of him when he was named a semifinalist, though he had a number of impressive museums to his credit and some had

been published in the United States.

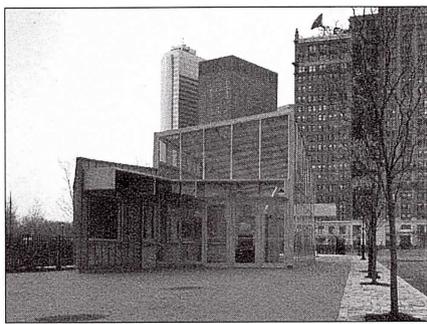
Who would have thought, when **Frank Gehry** (the obvious hometown candidate for the most coveted commission of the 1980s) lost out to **Richard Meier**, that when the Getty Center finally opened in 1997, all eyes would be dazzled by a Gehry museum in an obscure little Spanish city, and Meier would be publishing a tale as much of tribulation as of triumph. (*Building the Getty*, by Richard Meier, Alfred A. Knopf, 1997, 211 pages, 8 1/4 x 8 1/4, 145 photographs, \$35.00 cloth). The biggest problems — inaccessibility, inflexibility, an ill-defined institutional agenda — were no fault of the architect. They were programmed in. The limitless budget does not seem to have been a factor, except in creating unrealistic expectations and making it possible to proceed too soon. As Martin Filler made very clear in *The New York Review of Books* ("The New Getty," December 18, 1997, pp. 29–34), the Getty was simply too young and unformed to know what it wanted or needed.

Although regard for Wright's Guggenheim as a building has never wavered, its reputation as a museum has ebbed and flowed with the art that has been shown there or was in style at the time. The better a museum fulfills its original purpose (and the Guggenheim served the original small-scale, modern Guggenheim collection well), the worse it is apt to be at adapting to change. Museums need clairvoyance when they plan galleries specifically to meet their needs. Long-term judgments about the Guggenheim in Bilbao are likely to be based both on what the museum ends up becoming and on the influence it exerts



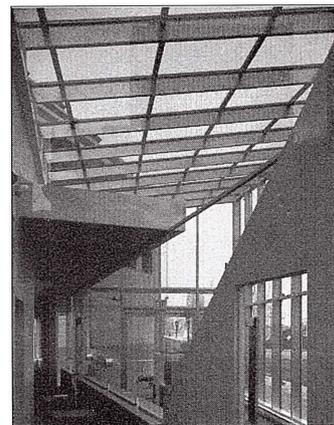
David Kepp

*Museum of Jewish Heritage,  
Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo & Associates*



Paul Warchol

*Visitor center, Claire Weisz and Mark Yoes*



Paul Warchol

*Visitor center, Claire Weisz and Mark Yoes*

on other museums. There are sure to be some horrors as less disciplined and experienced hands try to emulate Gehry's bold moves.

### The Museum that Should Have Been

Unfortunately, the most interesting candidate for comparison is not going to be built. A collaboration between the artist **Frank Stella** and the New York architect **Robert Kahn**, the Costantini Museum was designed for an international competition to house a private collection of modern Latin American paintings, but won only honorable mention. The brief called for an "urban landmark" on a park-like, 75,000-square-foot public plaza in Buenos Aires. Although the proposed 45,200-square-foot, partially underground structure with an auditorium, temporary exhibition space, bookstore, café, office, and workshop is composed of curved forms like Bilbao, it crawls along the ground more like a creature with a jagged tail, and spirals upward and downward at the same time. It is intended to have an organic quality that makes it part of the landscape of the redesigned plaza and recalls the "primal landscape" of the womb.

Visitors cross a footbridge to enter a convoluted space with access to circular permanent and oval temporary galleries, which lead down to more regular, skylighted exhibition spaces on lower levels — sort of a reverse Guggenheim Fifth Avenue. The project is interesting both for the merger of man-made and natural landscape forms that coexist on the colorful plaza (a second structure rises above the trees on the other end) and for the integration of art and architecture. Al-

though the interior spaces are rationally conceived, the exterior shapes resemble creatures of the sea, jungle flora, and elements from Stella's paintings and sculptures, which have become increasingly volumetric over the years. Like Gehry, Stella, who is one of the most highly regarded artists of our time, has been investigating three-dimensional space for decades, but he started from a pictorial point of view, working first with flat rectangles, then with shaped canvas, and then with shaped canvas in relief. He moved to room-size, tent-like constructions and recently into three dimensions with insides, outsides, and architectural scale in a design for the visitor center at Philip Johnson's estate. He has worked with Kahn on a number of projects for his own properties. Their collaboration on the Costantini Museum puts a new spin on the much discussed competition between art and architecture, though obviously not all paintings would be equally happy there. Still, it would have provided an intriguing contrast to sculpturesque museums designed solely by architects.

### Subtly Sculpturesque

No one will call the tiny visitor center for the new Museum of Jewish Heritage in Battery Park City assertive, but it is certainly sculpturesque, without a curve in sight. A pair of shining trapezoids — one made of clear glass, the other covered in lead-coated copper roofing — intersect to create a quietly striking 1,300-square-foot pavilion containing a ticket window, administrative offices, and a security checkpoint, which were left out of the program for the pyramidal museum by

**Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo & Associates.** That solid, sober, symbolic, symmetrical structure with inside and outside separated by heavy stone walls, set the tone for the tiny addition, which complements it by contrast. The museum's static, monumental exterior gives no hint of the fluid journey inside, where flashing slides in a dignified, Rothko Chapel-like hexagonal space orient visitors, who then travel through exhibitions on early twentieth-century Jewish life, up to a darker space on the second floor for an intimate trip through the Holocaust years, and up again to a light-filled space where the years of renewal from 1945 to the present are celebrated.

Inside and outside are one in the the visitor center by architect **Claire Weisz** and **Mark Yoes**, who are married but don't usually practice together. Their light, open, irregular structure looks out on the main museum, park, and city skyline, orienting visitors by letting them see where they are and where they are going. It creates an upbeat transition between the struggles of the past and the possibilities of the future visible all around at the foot of the New York skyline.

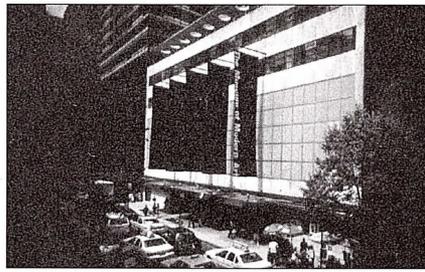
### Taniguchi's MoMA

It may seem conservative because its simple geometric volumes, subtle lighting, and respectful insertions will make it look as if it has always been there. But its archeological approach — uncovering original building fabric, restoring it in some places (the entrance canopy and interior Bauhaus staircase), and revealing it in others (the base of the MoMA tower on the garden facade) — is radical in a modern museum, dedicated by definition to newness and change. And the problem-



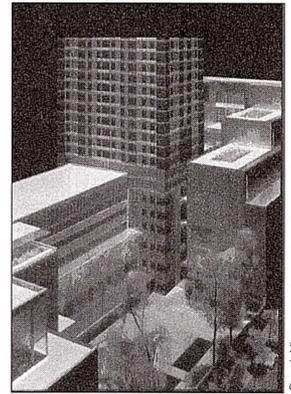
© 1997 The Museum of Modern Art

*Plaza Hotel and Heckscher Building  
(the Museum of Modern Art opens on the twelfth floor  
of the Heckscher Building, 1929)*



Peter Harboldt

*Museum of Modern Art, 1939 facade,  
Philip Goodwin and Edward Durrell Stone*



David Allison

*Aerial view from the northeast of the Abby Aldrich  
Rockefeller Sculpture Garden, model,  
Yoshio Taniguchi*

solving approach Taniguchi took, though modern theoretically, departs from the more intuitive aestheticism used on most ambitious art museum buildings.

It is probably what got him the job, since all three finalists presented clear, reasoned, legible schemes. But when they submitted final projects, the other two contenders added expressionistic elements and presented the trustees with more information and ideas. Taniguchi did what worked the first time. He also interviewed the members of the staff in depth and listened to their suggestions.

The architect's patient analysis of the problems at hand ends up looking simple — or obvious. But it was not so obvious when the problems were first presented.

He proposed restoring the facades along 53rd Street but moving the main entrance to 54th Street, which has always seemed like the back door — at least since the garden wall went up. He softens that edge with a row of trees and connects 53rd and 54th streets midblock with a public passageway on the west side of the garden, where the ticket booths will be located. The garden itself, the museum's best feature, will be restored and extended. A library accessible to the public will be placed at the east end where the restaurants are now. The atrium will be relieved of its circulatory function; the escalators will be moved away from the garden. The big new galleries that big new art demands will be located on the Dorset Hotel site. But though the museum will almost double in size, the scale will change almost imperceptibly, and only in some locations.

Taniguchi's decision to reveal the museum's architectural history is part of a trend James Fenton recently identified ("What Are Museums For?," *The New York Review of Books*, January 15, 1998, pp. 40–45). The Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and other museums are ripping out "functional" modern insertions to reveal original buildings and thereby make their own architectural history part of their educational programs. The movement gives architecture a more assertive and complicated role, substituting authenticity for practicality, and placing the museums themselves in a larger cultural and urban context.

Next door to MoMA on 53rd Street, **Tod Williams Billie Tsien and Associates** has dealt with history more allusively in the design for the Museum of American Folk Art's first freestanding building. The \$19 million, 20-foot-wide structure will contain 12,500 square feet of galleries, a 100-seat lecture hall, an amphitheater, a cafeteria, and a giftshop on six stories above ground and two underground levels. A folded wall of steel paneling extending the full height of the facade will contain the image of a hand, adding meaning subtly and abstractly, as it is conveyed in folk art. Visitors will experience the collection from the top down, descending through galleries filled with natural light from a saw-toothed skylight. The light will invest the objects with the spiritual power their makers intended. The craftsmanly treatment of materials, typical of the architects' work, will also connect it with its collections and with the arts and crafts tradition behind the history of modern architecture.

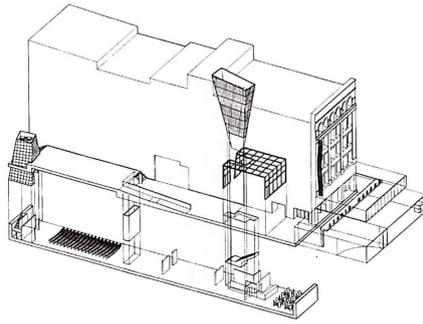
## Museums in the Boroughs

Eighty blocks north, the Studio Museum in Harlem occupies a six-story, mixed-use building on 125th Street. The museum acquired a derelict building next door five years ago, tore it down, and created a paved courtyard on the site to give itself some breathing room. Now **Rogers Marvel Architects** is turning the 25-by-200-foot open lot into a functioning public space with a sculpture garden, auditorium, galleries for the permanent collection, and a sleek, new, modern glass-walled entrance that connects the new underground facilities and the garden on their roof to the existing museum, visually and functionally. The architects are working with the city's Department of Design and Construction and Department of Cultural Affairs on the \$4.5 million, 12,000-square-foot project, which includes renovation of the existing building. The new steel-and-glass entrance resembles the original MoMA facade, but here the outer wall is enticingly translucent, rather than transparent, and it houses a glass pavilion that carries natural light and conditioned air to the gallery and lobby below ground. Crisp modern letters spell "STUDIO MUSEUM" on top of a horizontal slab of an awning, which demarcates the original first floor. A truncated pyramid, finished in stained concrete, rises out of the underground galleries carrying stairs and building services from the auditorium to the sculpture garden. It is expected to begin construction in June, be completed by the end of 1999, and play a role in the Harlem Renaissance nearby.

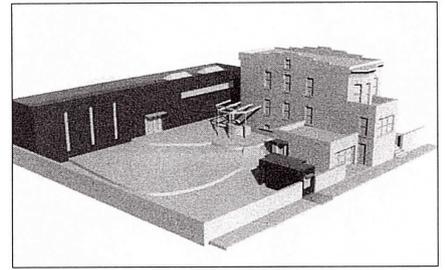
In Queens, where **Frederick Fisher** recently redesigned and expanded P.S. 1



*Museum of American Folk Art,  
Tod Williams Billie Tsien and Associates*



*The Studio Museum in Harlem,  
Rogers Marvel Architects*



*The Louis Armstrong House Museum,  
Rogers Marvel Architects*

(*Oculus*, November 1997, p. 5) with **David W. Prendergast**, and **Rafael Viñoly** renovated the Queens Museum a few years ago, **Rogers Marvel** and the Department of Design and Construction are also at work on the Louis Armstrong House Museum. The approximately \$762,000, 4,500-square-foot project is expected to begin construction in the spring. It should attract 60,000 visitors a year to the musician's modest, three-story row house on 107th Street in Corona. The architects and city officials are in the process of deciding whether to build an addition on adjacent land for the Louis Armstrong archives and other facilities for visitors to the museum.

### Museums by New York Architects Elsewhere

At the College of Wooster in Ohio, **Kliment & Halsband Architects** has created a new museum and art center in a Gothic Revival gymnasium, which became a studio art building 25 years ago. In order to retain an intact second-floor gymnasium and third-floor running track in the 32,000-square-foot historic structure, and use it for studio space, the architects elected to build a 17,000-square-foot addition for the museum galleries and art history classrooms. The new curved wing faces playing fields surrounded by dormitories. It derives its imagery and window patterns from the original building while frankly acknowledging its newness and activating the open space nearby. The centrally located museum lobby embraces the original terra-cotta entrance, reiterating the connection, but also leads confidently into new light-filled space inside.

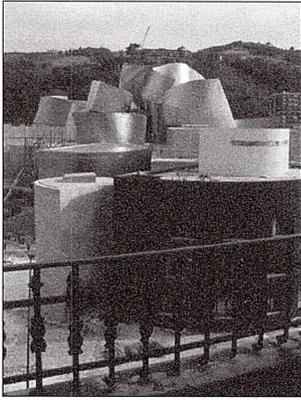
The history that **I. M. Pei** has drawn on in the design of the new Miho Museum in the precipitous Shigaraki mountains north of Kyoto is that of ancient Chinese and Japanese landscape painting, where a narrative is merely suggested in fragments. He has buried 80 percent of the 187,508-square-foot museum in the mountains, designed the roof to reflect the forms of the landscape, and covered it with trees. Visitors approach the 27-acre site, nestled between two ridges, through a mountain tunnel. They cross a deep valley on a 400-foot bridge supported by cables, and encounter the museum plaza, where they ascend a series of terraces reminiscent of a Japanese temple. Then they enter the main public space of the museum, sheathed in honey-colored limestone, where the Shumei family collection of art and antiquities is displayed against the horizon under hipped skylights. (Who said the Getty was out of the way?)

### Destination Museums

Another trend, about as far from these Xanadus as you can get, is the creation of mini-museums at existing tourist destinations. The Skyscraper Museum, which sprang up last summer in the middle of the Wall Street canyons, may be the best example. The concept, developed by **Lynne Breslin**, was to create an image of the Street with rooms off to the side where tableaux composed of old office furniture and cases filled with intriguing old documents were displayed. A pair of gigantic photographic murals contrasted the 1909 banking hall at 44 Wall Street with its 1996 image. The museum left those temporary headquar-

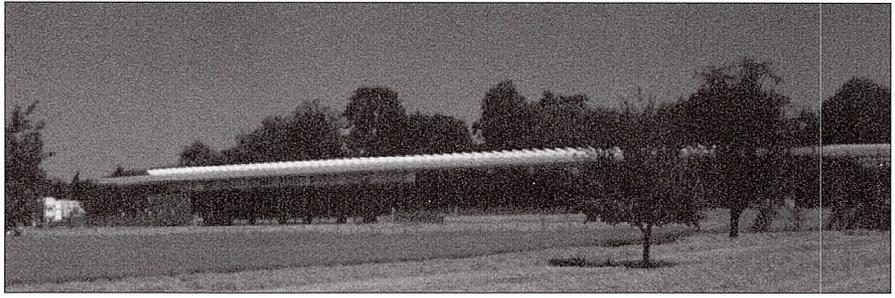
ters at the end of the year and is now negotiating a long-term venue.

Breslin is one of a handful of architects who specializes in on-site installations (page 12). For the new Grand Central Terminal, which is becoming a shopping mall as well as a transportation hub, she is designing exhibitions about the history of the station, the way it has been represented in the movies, the unionization of Grand Central workers, and the train cars themselves, bringing full circle the trend of museums to record their own history, embrace commerce, and provide tourists with entertainment and an educational experience at the same time.



Alexander Gorlin

Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Frank O. Gehry



Beyeler Museum, Basel, Renzo Piano

## The New European Museums

by Alexander Gorlin

**A**pproached from the airport, Bilbao has the undisturbed character of an ungentrified city, which will soon be lost in the redevelopment fervor spurred on by the Guggenheim's global ambitions. Besides the industrial archeology around the museum, the city has a small medieval quarter, up the river from Frank Gehry's metallic explosion of form and space. Framed by an intact nineteenth-century city and surrounding verdant hills, the new museum plays off the site with maximum contrast, and with some of the wild, shimmering excess of Spanish Baroque churches in the Churrigueresque style.

When confronted by a work of such self-assurance and conviction, as with most great works of art, one is buffeted by contrasting emotions, which are simultaneously exhilarating and disturbing, mordant in its incisive, trenchant commentary on boring, unimaginative architecture and its allusions to the etching of metals, Bilbao is like a vortex, a centripetal force, pulling one in with deep ocean tentacles like the giant squid from Verne's *10,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. Recalling Ronchamp as well as yoga contortionists, Gehry's convex-concave curves are marked by a certain tension, a reference to an underlying gridded order, always missing in cheap decon imitators. However, at times Bilbao exudes the aura of an overripe fruit, on the verge of rotting, with forms blown out of proportion from a smaller and more manageable size. Wistfully, one starts to think of lines from Le Corbusier's "Poem

to the Right Angle" and longs for Mies's severe grids. Inside, most of the art was not yet installed, but the 100-foot steel walls of the Richard Serra were dwarfed in the 400-foot-long gallery. One can only imagine art in galleries with 40- and 50-foot ceilings. Furthermore, Bilbao is not perfectly built. On the exterior facing the river, unmatched titanium panels give the building a checkerboard effect that Gehry himself has been demanding be replaced; inside, the sheetrock curves wobble here and there. Gehry's early work in chain link and exposed plywood derived some of its strength from imperfection, but here, as with most of his recent work for clients with larger budgets, the success of the design depends as much on precise construction as does

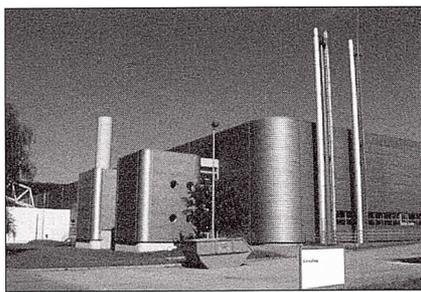
I. M. Pei's limestone National Gallery.

Still, compared with Bilbao, the other museums paled, especially Renzo Piano's rigidly-gridded Beyeler Museum in Basel. This straitlaced Miesian "universal space" for Ernst Beyeler's private collection of twentieth-century masterpieces — in a field on the outskirts of the city — is a modern temple, a very long and narrow neo-rationalist box. From inside one can see both France and Germany, surrounded by the collection amassed after World War II. One can only wonder at the provenance of some of these paintings. The luminous waffle grid ceiling, obscuring angled skylights above, has the air of an overlighted New York drugstore due to the client's meddlesome insistence on changing its luminous fabric. Parallel stone walls defining the gallery spaces are faced with an exotic reddish porphyry from an obscure quarry in Peru, discovered after a long search, which resembles,

of all things, the native red Basel stone. Beyeler also truncated the museum, cutting off one bay on each end, stopping short the necessary velocity of the length of the design. The most striking view is from across the cultivated farm field (in Germany or France) where the building appears as the proverbial modern architect's dream, a machine in the garden.

Just down the road, but across the border in Weil am Rhein, Germany, is the open air architectural museum of Vitra, the furniture company that makes miniature and full-size historic modern chairs. The owner, Rolf Feldbaum, collects architecture as well. On this pastoral site is an invitation-only party of architectural guests of different degrees of restraint. The buildings by Alvaro Siza, Tadao Ando, and Nicholas Grimshaw are polite. They speak in understated tones, while merry Frank Gehry prances and drunken Zaha Hadid throws up on the lawn. Her fire station with pointy, folded, concrete planes Chock-Full-O'Rebars was so much more a gay disco than a sober workhorse that its users abandoned it. The firemen did not share her voyeuristic vision complete with translucent glass toilet stalls. It is now, not surprisingly, a museum for — of course — more chairs! Siza's factory seems genuinely embarrassed by the scene and, except for a strange dinosaur-like skeletal bridge to Grimshaw, turns its blank brick wall across the road. As for Ando's conference center, it is no Kahn-conference center. It is too dependent on surface effects from bare concrete and tie-rod holes for Zen meditation.

Overall, it is a fairly grim place organized around a sunken court that doesn't make sense in the midst of this beautiful



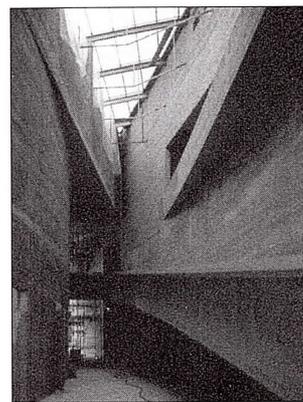
Alexander Gorlin

Vitra Factory, Weil am Rhein, Nicholas Grimshaw



Alexander Gorlin

Canova Museum addition, Asolo, Carlo Scarpa



Alexander Gorlin

Museum of Modern Art, Helsinki,  
Steven Holl Architects

scenery. Gehry's museum is much smaller than the published wide-angle photographs suggest. His Vitra headquarters in Basel is an intimate rehearsal for Bilbao. In a single room, light floods and sculpts the space in unusual ways that compliment and create a dialogue with the chairs and changing exhibitions.

A short hop takes us to Carlo Scarpa's addition to the Canova Museum in Asolo, where the slick and sensuous neoclassical sculptor's Pantheon-like tomb on the hill dominates the small town of Possagno not far from his better known Brion cemetery. The original museum of plaster casts of Canova's major sculpture is in a vaulted classical basilica. The addition is abstract and cubic, but is mediated by a rustic, terracotta tile structure, surprisingly also by Scarpa. This jewel of a building is illuminated by a variety of unusual windows and skylights. At the corners are smaller glass cubes of light, a detail that has influenced everyone from Steven Holl to James Turrell. More architecture is packed in this tiny space of only 1,500 square feet than in entire buildings a thousand times larger. Scarpa's is an architecture of the joining of materials, an architect's architecture. One trips, staring in awe and admiration at the remarkable ways walls, floors, and ceilings come together, articulated to give dignity and individuality to stone, metal, and wood.

From sunny Italy, it's a three-hour flight to the foreboding, flat landscape of far northern Helsinki, where at this time of year the sun barely sets. An eerie perpetual twilight lingers into the wee hours of the night, never totally darkening, very much like the Manhattan sky. The

problem in visiting a city like Helsinki — filled with yet to be seen architectural treasures by Eliel Saarinen, Alvar Aalto, and Lars Sonck — for only a day was that the framed, but not yet closed-in, Museum of Contemporary Art by Steven Holl could not hold one's attention very long. The bold curve of the museum and its chamfered corner do capture and redirect the energies of the site at the intersection of two major avenues, gesturing to Saarinen's Natural History Museum. However, despite all the romantic associations and the aqueous conceptual linkage of the canal to Töölö Bay (not even Aalto's Finlandia Hall actually made it to the edge of the bay), Holl's museum is quite far from the water and blocked by a major railroad yard. The pool and cascade through the museum, lovely as they are, anticipate a connection to the bay that may never be realized, at least in our lifetime. Inside, one enters into the most bizarrely wonderful atrium of forced perspectival ramps, terminating in the diminished spatial horizon of an unexpected vertical slit, like the eye of a cat — finally something new, a feline architecture, a space in which Roman Polanski's *Cat People* would feel completely at home. The indirectly lit galleries around the ramped atrium culminate in a grand space at the top of the museum with a great view of the city. On the outside, hand-rubbed aluminum panels, sandblasted structural glass planks, matte zinc, and acid washed copper will give a cold, icy look to the museum in this cold, icy land — in contrast to the colorful neoclassical pastels of much of Helsinki or the warm tones of Saarinen's buildings. Ruskin's delight in the natural pati-

na of age, which develops over time, should be contrasted with the instant gratification of hand-applied applications that come perilously close to the faux finishes of the decorator. Only time will tell what is real or forced. And only the contractor will know for sure.

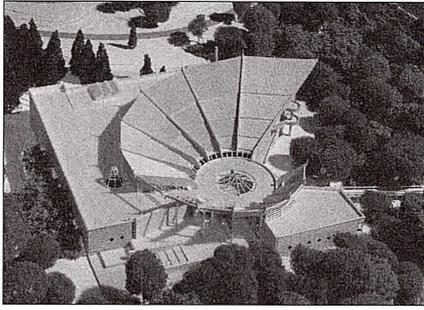
## "Other" Museums

by Philip Nobel

**A** large new crop of promising museum projects being designed by a relatively small group of New York architects reflects a growing national trend in the construction of science museums, children's museums, cultural centers, and halls of fame, but it has been cast into shadow during the last year by the spotlight the media has focused on Bilbao, Los Angeles, and West 53rd Street.

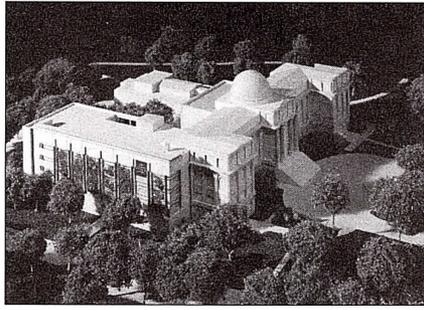
The rolling economy, which is producing unprecedented levels of philanthropy, has contributed to the building boom. Meanwhile, the trustees of lower profile museums have watched covetously as enormous audiences descended on the many art museums that have revamped themselves as artistic and architectural "happenings," of which the regular Saturday circus at the Metropolitan may be the best example. If overexposed mega-museums can be seen in the final act of transformation from private "cabinets of curiosities" and civic storehouses to sites of themed mass entertainment, then the building boom for "other" museums is a kind of echo, swapping direct education for high-art fun.

Perhaps because of their specialized natures, and the famous conservatism of



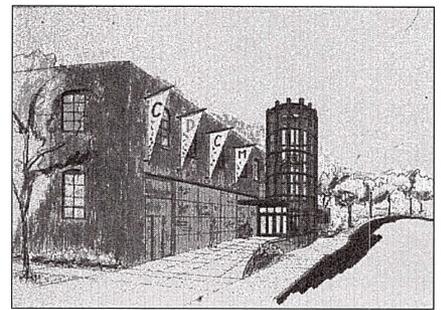
Jack Pettler/Esto

*National Museum of the American Indian Cultural Resources Center, Polshek and Partners*



Jack Pettler/Esto

*The New Botanical Garden Plant Studies Center, Polshek and Partners*



*Children's Discovery Center Museum, Parkersburg, West Virginia, the Lee H. Skolnick Architecture + Design Partnership*

not-for-profit boards, these museum commissions tend to gravitate to a few proven firms. **Polshek and Partners** has almost cornered the market on non-art museum building in the New York area. In addition to the Hayden Planetarium and renovation of the north side of the American Museum of Natural History (still closing in on its portentous opening day, January 1, 2000), the ongoing work at the Museum of the City of New York, and the recent renovation of the Cooper Hewitt National Museum of Design, Polshek's firm is working on the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center in Connecticut, the National Museum of the American Indian Cultural Resource Center in Suitland, Maryland, and Scandinavia House in New York City.

Channeling some of the millions from their phenomenally successful Foxwoods Casino, the Mashantucket Pequots see their museum as a symbol of cultural rebirth. The three principal programmatic components of the project — a large gathering space, a research center, and the museum itself — are integrated into a curious structure that synthesizes a wide range of Native American forms from the Pequot's own history and beyond. The prominent arcing truss, for instance, derives from kayak construction. A 200-foot-tall tower marks the site of the Mashantucket Pequot Reservation in the rolling landscape.

In Maryland, the striking American Indian Cultural Resource Center, a Smithsonian institution, is the result of a collaboration between **Polshek and Partners** and the **Native American Design Collaborative**. The center combines nearly 60,000 square feet of collection storage,

workshop space, and conservation laboratories with a spiritual function — connected to nature — expressed by the golden spiral of its roof trusses and its strict orientation to the cardinal points. Like the Pequot museum, the American Indian Cultural Resource Center is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 1998.

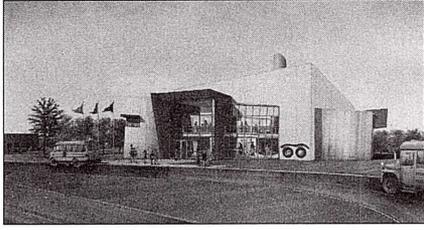
For Scandinavia House, the brief is to build a 35,000-square-foot cultural center with administrative, meeting, and exhibition facilities on the site of the former East German Embassy at Park Avenue and 37th Street. The client, the American Scandinavian Foundation, is the cultural bridgehead in New York for all of the Scandinavian nations, and the design will reflect the cohesion and diversity of these cultures as it rises on its narrow site. The existing flimsy embassy structure, built under a dubious and dangerous extension of diplomatic immunity, will be torn down.

Planned renovations to the Asia Society will update a similar cultural institution. In November, the Asia Society selected **Voorsanger and Associates Architects** from a pool of 46 firms to undertake extensive renovations to its Park Avenue headquarters, designed by **Edward Larrabee Barnes** in 1981. The project involves the creation of new galleries and a glass-covered sculpture court the size of a roomy pocket park. This feature will no doubt draw comparisons to the Garden Court at the Pierpont Morgan Library, which Voorsanger's firm completed in 1991.

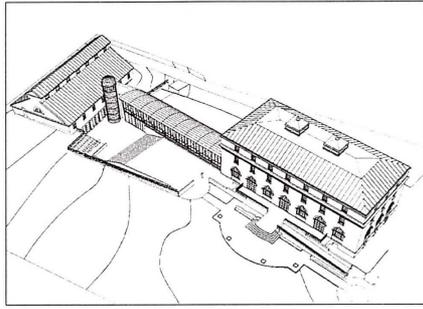
**The Lee H. Skolnick Architecture + Design Partnership** has several interesting museum projects under way. Thanks to coverage in *The New York Times* last fall,

the best-known of these projects may be the Mohammed Ali Museum and Center for Tolerance in Louisville, Kentucky. This catch-all alternative institution — Skolnick characterized it as “part Jimmy Carter center, part museum, part hall of fame” — will be a concrete expression of Ali's reviving interest in his hometown. It will also play a role in generating excitement in downtown Louisville, analogous to the energy that Pei Cobb Freed's Rock & Roll Hall of Fame brought to the center of Cleveland. The project is in the very early conceptual development stages; no site has been selected, and the program is still in flux. In November, Skolnick met with Ali on his Michigan farm to begin pinning down the contents and design of the museum, which will include exhibitions on the boxer's life and the history of his sport, as well as a yet-to-be-defined “moral component,” where Ali's spiritual and charitable interests will be highlighted.

Skolnick's office is also working on three children's museums, a science museum, and a nature center. In Parkersburg, West Virginia, it has prepared a conceptual case study for the conversion of an historic lumber mill into the Parkersburg Children's Discovery Center. Work on the project includes the design of all exhibitions. At the Miami Youth Museum in Florida, Skolnick is also providing both architectural and exhibition design services. The exhibitions there, currently in schematic design, will focus on the geography and culture of south Florida. A preliminary rendering shows an exhibition space filled with mangroves, alligators, a road sign for I-95, a huge map, and an oversized lemon.



*Children's Science Center, Brookhaven National Laboratory, Goshow Associates*



*Staten Island Children's Museum Expansion, David W. Prendergast Architects*



*Museo de Arte de Ponce, RKK&G*

Pretend City in Orange County, California, will be even more spirited. This children's museum is being planned as a miniature dream city covering 60,000 square feet. Skolnick calls it a "a small-scale city that kids can explore and wander through." Drawings show closely-packed buildings and towers that he designed to "tumble out of" the Big Box museum.

Skolnick's interiors and exhibition design for the Nature Museum of the Chicago Academy of Sciences will cover 30,000 square feet and include a weather lab, a wilderness walk, and a glassed-in butterfly haven filled with live bugs. To cater to the children of Chicago, the focus of the museum will be the experience of nature within urban areas. The building, designed by **Perkins & Will**, will open next fall. This month, the Skolnick Partnership's Trapps Gateway Center will open at the Mohonk Preserve in Gardiner, New York. This orientation and exhibition center is one of several projects that the firm is involved with on Mohonk's 6,600 acres.

**Goshow Associates** is working on an interactive children's science center in a less pristine setting: the Brookhaven National Laboratory in Upton, Long Island. The 12,000-square-foot structure is replacing the current museum, which is housed in a decommissioned nuclear reactor. The steel-frame building will be covered with colored metal panels to create a lively environment. The south wall will have translucent insulated panels to diffuse the light for the permanent exhibitions in the main space. A mezzanine "bar" will provide temporary exhibition space and a gathering place for special

events. The \$2.5 million building, which will be a focus and gateway of the site, is scheduled for completion in 1999.

A similar project nearby is the Staten Island Children's Museum, which moved to an historic Italianate house in Snug Harbor in 1985 and is now expanding into a 50-by-80-foot barn next door, built in 1890. **David W. Prendergast Architects** and the **New York City Department of Design and Construction** have designed a steel-framed covered walkway and an entrance to the barn in the form of a silo with an elevator inside. The basilican barn, with a roof supported by rows of trusses, will remain open with flexible exhibition space on the upper level and house a new café, party room, offices, and restrooms on the ground floor. The first \$1.2 million phase of the 8,000-square-foot project is expected to be completed later this year.

**RKK&G Museum and Cultural Facilities Consultants** (Arthur Rosenblatt, Kupiec + Koutsomitis Architects, and Maria Cristina Gomez) also has a large share of the non-art museum market. The firm's current projects include two museums in Puerto Rico (*Oculus*, October 1996, p. 3), work on the American Museum of Natural History, the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens, the New York Hall of Science, and designs for the Songwriter's Hall of Fame (*Oculus*, November 1996, p. 8). This last project, now in the early planning stages, will be a midsize institution at an undetermined midtown — preferably Broadway — location. It will include permanent and temporary exhibition space and a large auditorium devoted to preserving the history of American song.

RKK&G's plan for the Oswiecim

Jewish Cultural Center includes work on a dozen historic buildings in and around the old Jewish ghetto in Auschwitz, Poland. The ambitious project calls for the restoration of the town square and an historic synagogue, and the establishment of a teacher's institute and a large learning center within the renovated buildings. The design is planned in three phases and is carefully integrated with shuttle buses to the nearby Auschwitz and Birkenau camps. The goal of the project is to draw some of the hundreds of thousands of visitors from the camps into the city itself, to study Jewish culture in the region, not just its demise.

A few questions dog the construction of these "other" museums. Can they succeed in luring the art museum—mad public? Will any of us live to see a new science or children's museum celebrated in *Vogue*, profiled in *Vanity Fair*, and reviewed on the front page of *The New York Times*? Could the designer of a non-art museum ever rise to the level of Gehry, Meier or — we'll soon see — Taniguchi? If ecstatic, thoughtful architecture determines which museums remain dusty and which become cool — remember the relative calm in the Louvre before the pyramid? — then we may be very close to the age of cheek-by-jowl mass entertainment at these "other" museums.

*Alexander Gorlin and Philip Nobel's reports were supported by the Emerging Writers Fund of the New York Foundation for Architecture.*

## Daniel Libeskind: The Museums as Metaphor

by Nina Rappaport

“Architecture is itself a program of walking, of light, of windows, of doors. It is possible to change a museum’s program and give the museum authorities other ideas. I believe architecture will increasingly articulate programs and space,” said Daniel Libeskind at his lecture on October 27 at Pratt Institute, where he presented four of his recent museums.

Each building’s form derives from philosophical metaphors related to the museum’s theme. Libeskind shapes the spaces and controls the viewing of art using voids, solids, and trajectories of site lines as symbols of historic events.

The Nussbaum Museum, which will open in the spring as part of the Osnabrück Historical Museum, is dedicated to painter Felix Nussbaum, who was hounded by the Nazis and then murdered at Auschwitz. Libeskind calls it a “museum without an exit,” a metaphor for the life of one man. Traces of a recently discovered historic wall beneath the site became the path to enter the vertical museum, at the end of which is a very narrow, tall space (only six feet wide). “It is a gigantic canvas narrowing the trajectory of his life,” Libeskind explained, “You can’t step back to see the work.”

The zigzag form of the well-known Jewish Museum in Berlin is derived from site lines pointed toward addresses of old Jewish residences. The form also relates to an unfinished Schönberg opera and a Walter Benjamin text. The idea that the void represents lost lives is made evident in the design of the entry

space as a tower that “awes the visitors with light and as a moment of discontinuity. No objects remain except for the air of Berlin after the Holocaust,” Libeskind said. “How do you show the work of those who left — somewhere in the void? How is the void used museologically?”

Libeskind’s extension to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London — to be completed in 2002 on the site of the old boiler house — is intended to integrate exhibitions, educational facilities, and interactive galleries on twenty-first century themes. A controversial building for British landmarks officials to have approved, it is a 12,000-square-meter spiral, referring the spiral of art and history that does not set itself on a trajectory but has a spiritual idea of the center. As it circles, it shifts its vertical axis, setting up a discourse between inside and outside. “It is a winding and unwinding spiral that is like Ariadne’s thread through the labyrinth, which links the new and the old gallery spaces in a continuity,” Libeskind said. He worked on the project with **Ove Arup Engineers**. Libeskind’s design was also based on sketch of a hexagonal spiral for that site by the museum’s founder, Henry Cole.

The outside walls are covered with colorful ceramic tiles placed in a random geometric fractile pattern. A bridge leads from the street over a sunken garden to the entrance lobby, and a glazed elevator goes to the top floor, where the permanent collection galleries, orientation center, administrative offices, and café are situated. Escalators lead down to the lobby, temporary exhibition spaces, educational facilities, auditorium, restaurant, and children’s area below ground.

Libeskind’s latest commission, the Imperial War Museum in Gloucester, England, is part of the city’s revitalization. To suggest the theme of war, “the earth has been shattered into fragments.” A vertical shard represents light; a horizontal shard represents water. Referring to this project but describing all his work, Libeskind said, “The museum is a basic concrete lightweight structure with a flow of light and air; it transforms one’s idea of building.”

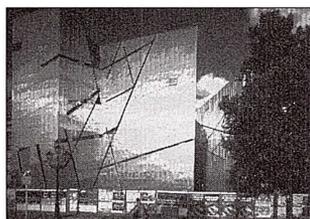
## Hodgetts + Fung Installations

When Craig Hodgetts and Ming Fung took the podium at the Architectural League on December 4, Fung explained, “With only one microphone, you are witnessing the way that Craig and I work — with a constant argument for the first five minutes.” But what the audience saw was a well-tuned seesaw of cooperation with a generous dose of good humor.

“Be careful about getting your wish,” Hodgetts advised the young architects in the crowd as he showed some of the work he had done with Robert Mangurian and Les Walker in New York in the 1970s. In fact, their bright red Creative Playthings store with gigantic television screens and their Transitory Structures mobile theater uncannily prefigured the high-tech temporary structures he and Fung design today.

“Perhaps we were yearning for L.A. already,” Hodgetts said, noting the “basic ignorance or disdain for provenance” he and Mangurian always shared. “It’s still part of our practice.”

Still, he spoke of the much-admired, recently-demolished temporary Towell



Bitter Brecht Fotografie

Jewish Museum with the Berlin Museum, Daniel Libeskind



Benny Chan/Fotoworks

Felix Nussbaum Museum competition, Osnabrück, Daniel Libeskind

Library at UCLA (1992–97) wistfully, and even showed a precedent — the Crystal Palace. The library’s location, on the central axis of the campus, was both the design’s inspiration and its nemesis. “The best way for the project not to be too intrusive in such an important place,” he said, “was to orchestrate it so it danced around the central axis rather than sitting on it.”

“It was built like an airplane of bent aluminum.” In order to make it more “library-like,” they placed it on a concrete foundation with a three-foot ledge. Because they couldn’t stand just building one shape, “every single room had to do with how the building actually performed,” Fung explained. Everything had to be flexible because of the seismic codes. The skin was bent to funnel rainwater away from the books. “Great attention was paid to things like solar heating and the orientation of the sun,” he noted. “The skin and elevation of the building ended up being part of the mechanical system,” she added.

“I thought everything had to be about color, and I was just seething that we didn’t have enough budget to paint the air conditioners. Then we saw Frank Gehry and he said, ‘That is so cool that you didn’t paint the air conditioners.’” Despite its success, a retiring chancellor had it torn down to make way for a big farewell graduation ceremony. But it will rise again — as the Pomona College architecture school.

“Permanence is not necessarily a part of an architect’s life,” Hodgetts said. And though he later admitted, “We’d really like to do serious architecture,” they showed a number of wildly inventive temporary installations and a scheme to enliven Madison

Square Garden, give it “a carnival atmosphere” and “a street presence” with lots of places to shop, a skating rink, and “a very, very large steel truss structure, provocative works of art by people like Bruce Nauman and Barbara Kruger, and even a restaurant where customers can grill their own steaks.”

“We’re constantly going back and forth between an architectural point of view about geometry, space, structure,” Hodgetts said, and “the other part, which is more cinematic, with sequence and a certain kind of narrative,” Fung added.

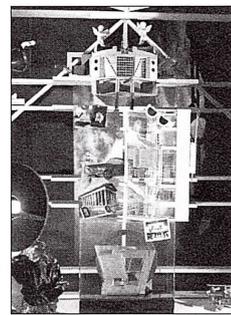
They wanted a pavilion for Microsoft at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in L.A. “to be a kind of stealth operation, where you would come and say, ‘Wow,’ and only later find out it was Microsoft,” Hodgetts said, admitting that Archigram had long ago “charted out some of this territory. We used a lot of smoke and mirrors” in the \$1 million, 700,000-square-foot installation with a “monster truck on top of a rock landscape supported on a hydraulic lift to make it go up and down.” They needed actual movement and dynamic lighting (designed by Nelson Popper) to “turn the players” who just stand there playing games “into theater.”

The inspiration for a power company’s exhibition in Germany came from the realization that, unlike in California, “sunlight in Germany is a scarce resource.” For “No more daisies,” they painted the interior of the hall black, and used mirrors attached to rods to bounce little teaspoons of sunlight around. In one place, “sunlight actually burns through a disk,” Fung said. “We thought, oh boy, in Germany we can have really great craftsman-

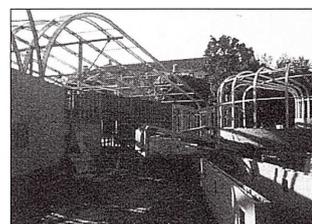
ship, but they threw up their hands at what we wanted them to do, so we had to go back to the San Fernando Valley to the people who build movie sets for the multimedia effects we needed to touch base with mythic reality,” Hodgetts explained.

Myth and reality converge in a renovation of the 1923 Egyptian Theater on Hollywood Boulevard, which Sid Grauman built right before the famous Chinese Theater. “There’s almost nothing there, but in L.A., anything more than 30 years old is historic,” Fung said. Their initial plan to recreate the dramatic old colonnade and the proscenium (which Mike Todd, ironically, had demolished to make room for *Cleopatra*’s wide Cinemascope screen) was thwarted because the old patterns wouldn’t work for Surround Sound either. Since the client, the American Cinematheque, needed a space to show different kinds of films, they ended up with “a dialogue between old and new. It’s a kind of collage with faux Egyptian columns in the courtyard,” Hodgetts said.

As usual, they rose to the technological challenge. “It’s a lot like designing the inside of a camera. We can’t attach anything to the ceiling or wall,” Fung said. When you enter the theater, the historic material will be illuminated. Then, when the lights dim, high-tech takes over — just the opposite of Hodgetts’s and his contemporaries’ early work, which often looked more technically advanced than it was. Now he delights in “the opportunity to make an excavation,” and the theatergoers have it both ways. —J.M.



Office conference room installation, Hodgetts + Fung



Towell (temporary) Library at UCLA, Hodgetts + Fung



Towell (temporary) Library at UCLA, Hodgetts + Fung

Hodgetts + Fung

Hodgetts + Fung

Ken Natanson

**The Museums of Moshe Safdie**

**M**oshe Safdie thinks about cities but designs museums, libraries, and other public buildings — with their effect on urbanism always in mind. At an Urban Center Books lecture on November 25, he began by discussing the ideas elaborated in two new books on his work (*Moshe Safdie*, edited by Wendy Kohn, Academy Editions, 320 pages, 9 7/8 x 13, over 300 illustrations, most in color, \$85.00 cloth; and *The City After the Automobile*, Basic Books, 187 pages, 6 x 8 1/2, 24 black-and-white sketches, \$24.00 cloth).

“The architecture of every age is subordinated to conceptions of the city, the Baroque especially. In this century, most of the architects who set the tone — Le Corbusier and Wright most of all — came forth with ideas about the city,” he said. “This is the first time when it isn’t clear what cities should become.”

When Safdie was a student in the early 1960s, he said, “We thought, if you solved the problem of density, why would people want to live in the suburbs?” The project that launched his career, the Habitat housing complex in Montreal, was an attempt to provide dense indoor and outdoor living space in the city.

Today nobody thinks “the problem of the city is soluble with a building type,” he explained as he described the various schools of thought on “the regional city that is 100 miles across.” There is the Edge City notion that dispersal is wonderful. There are also the New Urbanists, who “look at cute little nineteenth-century towns and wish away the problem,” he said, and the mega-scale school of Rem Koolhaas, who believes that

“the only response to mega-density is wholehearted embrace.”

Safdie thinks none of these approaches will do. “Transportation is the key element,” he said. “Every change in transportation has led to changes in the city.” Since dispersal is a fact of life, and residents of regional cities are commuting across vast areas, he suggests “rethinking downtown as the only center” and considering “the idea of several centers around modes of transportation interface,” such as train stations, ferry terminals, and places where subways meet buses.

The buildings he showed — like the National Gallery of Canada, which has a series of courtyards plugged into the street system and galleries with glass walls — demonstrated various types of urban intervention. They are all “rooted in place in a way that goes beyond contextualism,” he pointed out. The language they employ is “based on the tectonics of building,” which is “the key to authenticity.” Safdie also believes that “architectural form and concepts must be generated by the program, the life intended in the building,” the way it is in the work of Louis Kahn.

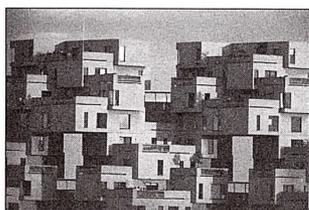
The theme of the garden, which derives from the Bahai Gardens in Haifa where Safdie grew up, appears again and again in his work, as do his other “personal obsessions” — building blocks, steps, and processional routes. The Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem is composed of a series of courtyard gardens with skywalks. Habitat was made out of blocks with gardens on top. “When we did it, we were the biggest consumers of Legos in Montreal,” he said.

Instead of standing alone like monuments, his museums

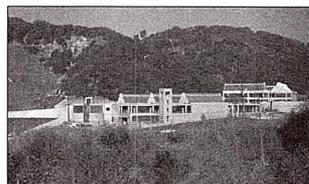
are woven into the fabric of the city or landscape. The Skirball Cultural Center and Museum in Los Angeles, which he called the Getty’s “poor cousin,” is set into a hillside like a temple in Delphi, with an amphitheater made out of a mud retention basin. The expanded Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem, which he won a competition to design last fall, will be a light-filled wedge cut through a mountain that explodes at one end. The Wichita Science Center and Children’s Museum emphasizes and straddles a bend in the river. The addition to the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, the oldest museum in the country, will be composed of a series of little house-sized galleries to blend into the “very fragile, delicate scale” of the surrounding town.

Even enormous Library Square in Vancouver, a seven-story rectangle on the edge of the modestly scaled downtown, which had to incorporate 300,000 square feet of new city offices, manages to do so without appearing unduly massive. The offices are placed in a semicircular tower that wraps around the library itself, creating a shop-lined passageway and lively urban space. It frames and energizes one end of the downtown core, which used to dribble away formlessly.

That impressively humane complex and the once-maligned mid-1980s scheme for Columbus Center, from which it derived, make it easy to see why people, looking at last year’s proposals for Columbus Circle, were asking, “Where is Moshe Safdie when we need him?” Right up the road in Boston, in one of the offices he maintains in Jerusalem and Toronto, or on the lecture circuit. —J.M.

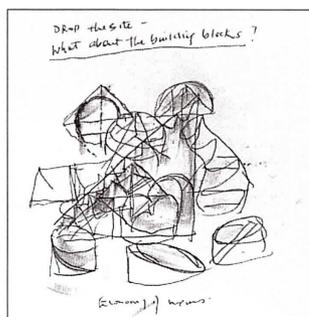


*Habitat, Montreal, Quebec, Moshe Safdie*



Timothy Hursley

*Skirball Cultural Center and Museum, Los Angeles, Moshe Safdie*



Moshe Safdie

*Science Center and Children’s Museum, Wichita, Kansas, Moshe Safdie*

The following article, which appeared on the cover of the *Style* section in *The Washington Post* on December 6, 1997, was reprinted with the permission of the author.

**Exhibit Shows Government Funding Design Successes**

by Benjamin Forgey  
Architecture Critic,  
*The Washington Post*

An exhibition praising recent civic architecture is perhaps the last thing to expect in this age of private wealth and public-sector penury. Thus, "Civics Lessons," the new show at the National Building Museum, is an especially welcome surprise. It is devoted solely to New York City, but its messages are relevant from Maine to California.

The exhibit takes a healthy, contrarian point of view. It celebrates cities in the face of widespread anti-urban sentiment. It focuses on the good that governments do in a period when the bad seems to get all the attention. And, at a time when superior or even adequate public design is often viewed as a frill, it posits that excellence is the only way to go.

Not surprisingly, the exhibition originated as a protest. Alarmed by the decline in civic projects after the elections of a Republican mayor and governor (in 1993 and 1994, respectively), New York architects and others decided to act. The strategy was straightforward: Show people what they were losing. An exhibition was planned to demonstrate both the quantity and quality of recent public works in the five boroughs of the city.

Projects initiated after 1985 were eligible; out of nearly 400 entries, 79 were chosen for the show by an independent jury. Organized

by the New York Foundation for Architecture (the non-profit arm of the New York chapter of the American Institute of Architects), the exhibit was unveiled last year in a fitting venue — the splendidly restored Great Hall of the Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House in lower Manhattan. Washington is the show's second stop and probably its last.

Variety is the show's leitmotif. The types of project run the gamut: schools of many different types and sizes, massive sewage treatment plants, bridges, extensive transportation improvements for planes, trains and automobiles, new parks and other kinds of civic spaces, master plans for single city blocks and entire neighborhoods, residential units for homeless people and others on the margins, police precinct houses, monumental civic buildings and more.

There is diversity, too, in the ways these projects were paid for: Federal, state, and local governments acting alone, in combination with each other and, occasionally, in collaboration with private interests. There are little projects and huge ones, and a mix of restorations, renovations, additions, and all-new construction. The stars of New York's architectural firmament are well represented, but so are lesser-known talents and anonymous designers working for public agencies.

The qualitative results of this great hodgepodge of activity are, of course, mixed. Some of the larger, more institutional projects seem pretty cold — for instance, with all kinds of government help, Columbia University appears to be building the architectural equivalent of ice cubes for a medical research

compound in upper Manhattan. Fundamentally, however, New York and its architects have done themselves proud. There is no set style; with but a few exceptions the designs appear to fit into their surroundings, often very inventively.

Thoughtfulness and a concern for human scale are pervasive.

In fact, the main unifying theme of the exhibition is quality. Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.), an ardent, effective advocate for excellence in public architecture throughout his long government career, begins his essay in the show's catalogue with a well-traveled — but highly pertinent — quote from Winston Churchill: "We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us." In general, the show brings life to the familiar proposition that if a job is worth doing, it is worth doing well.

Who, for instance, would not be shaped, literally and emotionally, by swimming or working out or even simply passing by an extraordinary new athletic facility in the Bronx, designed by **Rafael Viñoly Architects** for Lehman College of the City University of New York? It is a wonderful new building, airy and light on the inside, pleasing and dramatic on the outside.

True, some folks might not be affected at all — Churchill's point is hard to prove in detail. But it is certifiably true in the aggregate. Lewis Mumford said it in another way: "Architecture, like government, is about as good as a community deserves." Our architectural environment, in other words, is a collective endeavor, an accretion of choices. If we want our buildings — in particular our public buildings — to reflect well on us, we must



"Civics Lessons" at the National Building Museum



Richard Kruter, AIA, Barbara A. Nadel, AIA, John Sorrenti, FAIA, Patrick N. Fox, AIA, at "Civics Lessons," Washington, D.C.



Michael Fieldman, FAIA, Robert Davidson, AIA, Richard H. Franklin, AIA, Frederic M. Bell, AIA, at exhibition opening

Tobie Cornejo

Tobie Cornejo

Tobie Cornejo

**"Civics Lessons" opening at the National Building Museum**



Iobbe Cornejo

*Raj Bar-Kumarr, FAIA, RIBA, 1997 Institute president, Ronald L. Skaggs, 1998 Institute vice president*



Sara DeVore

*Michael Stanton, FAIA, 1998 president elect, Harold Adams, FAIA, chairman of the board, National Building Museum, and Ronald Altoon, FAIA, 1998 Institute president*



Sara DeVore

*Lenore Lucey, FAIA, executive vice president, NCARB, and Susan Henshaw Jones, president and director, National Building Museum*



Iobbe Cornejo

*Carol Clark, executive director, Stephen Cassell, exhibition designer, and Alan Z. Aiches, curator of collections, National Building Museum*

strive to make sure that experiences of the sort provided by Viñoly's spirit-raising construction are multiplied many times by other worthy works.

Among such, in this show, is the 107th Police Precinct and Station House in a Queens neighborhood. Designed by **Perkins Eastman Architects**, it is a fresh take on the clean-lined modern architecture of the pre-World War II era. Long and low, like a sleek ship, it was made for a variety of uses — locking up criminals, hosting community meetings. Appropriately, the architectural expression manages the neat trick of being both closed and open, protective and welcoming.

Independent architect **Richard Dattner**, a specialist in public works, is very nearly a category unto himself: He is present here in no less than 12 projects — eight federally mandated sewage treatment plants, two big public schools, a restoration of a historic subway station, and a public park. Built atop a new Hudson River sewage facility, the park is an excellent example of both architectural efficiency and political ingenuity — while doubling the social value of the same piece of turf, it quieted the howls of the plant's neighborhood opponents.

Other examples, by different architectural teams, include good-looking, cost-saving prototypes for elementary schools..., well-designed temporary residential facilities for homeless people..., ambitious, airy new airport buildings..., the excellent restoration of Manhattan's Municipal Building... and of an extraordinary nineteenth-century fire tower in Marcus Garvey Park in Harlem, and the heartening, hard-fought, complicated, public-private renovation of 42nd Street and sev-

eral of its notable theaters....

This very diversity of projects emphasizes real-world complexity. In effect, viewers are prodded to ask themselves lots of questions related not only to New York City and this particular exhibit, but also to their own habits. Who chooses what to build, and what not to build? How are the choices made? Can you really afford to do nothing? Can you allow valuable old things — from subway stations to city halls — to deteriorate to the point of uselessness? Can you ignore pressing needs for, say, schools? What would the city look like if these projects had not been built? How well (or poorly) would it function without them? Who would do these jobs if governments did not step up?

The answers to such questions are not easy, but the questions themselves run against the grain of complacency and selfishness that are such an unpleasant fact of life in today's United States. One cannot help but come away from this exhibition with an increased awareness of, and respect for, the public realm. It is in essence a sense of shared ownership: These are our sidewalks, our roads, our trains, our parks, our schools. They deserve, therefore, the best of our ingenuity and talent.

"Civics Lessons: Recent New York Public Architecture," at the National Building Museum, 401 F Street NW, through May 11. Open Monday through Saturday, 10 am to 4 pm, and Sunday, noon to 4.

**Two Venues, Two Openings**

**C**ivics Lessons: Recent New York Public Architecture" opened at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., to the fanfare of not one but two receptions. Each provided an important constituency with the opportunity to view the exhibition with leaders of the AIA New York Chapter, the American Institute of Architects, and the National Building Museum.

The reason for mounting the exhibition at the National Building Museum was to ensure that its lessons are made visible to a large and diverse public. On December 3, both the 1997 and 1998 AIA Boards of Directors were welcomed by the chairman of the museum's board, **Harold Adams**, FAIA, who commended the AIA New York Chapter for bringing the message about public investment in architecture to Washington, D.C., and encouraged architects from around the country to take the messages of the show back to their cities.

The 1997 AIA president **Raj Bar-Kumarr**, FAIA, RIBA, heralded the exhibition as critical to one of the fundamental goals of the Institute — increasing awareness of the importance of architecture, especially publicly-funded projects like those included in "Civics Lessons." **Susan Henshaw Jones**, president and director of the Building Museum, spoke about the theme of the show: the continued investment in the public realm. A former New Yorker, Jones expressed enthusiasm for the breadth of projects illustrated.

AIA New York Chapter executive director **Carol Clark** completed the ceremony by announcing the publication of the accompanying catalog

with an introduction by **Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan**, illustrations of all 79 projects in the show, and acknowledgments of the hundreds of contributors who made the exhibition and publication possible. Designed by **Pentagram**, the catalog (and a handsome poster) are available through the Chapter (683-0023, ext. 11).

At the second reception, attended by hundreds of museum members, Clark thanked those crucial to the inception and reinstallation of the show, especially three members of the Public Architects Committee who were present (**Robert I. Davidson**, AIA, **Richard Franklin**, AIA, and **Frederic Bell**, AIA), the skillful Building Museum installation team, and the talented exhibition designer **Stephen Cassell**, who reconfigured the oval format created for the grand rotunda of the Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House to fit into a more intimate rectangular gallery. —A.L.

## Building Green — and Big

by *Kira L. Gould*

Even though many of us have been hearing about 4 Times Square for months, a chance to hear from its designers — especially those who have been making it a “green” building for the heart of Manhattan — nearly always brings out a crowd. Such was the case last fall, when the Committee on the Environment sponsored a discussion with **Bruce Fowle**, FAIA, and **Dan Kaplan**, AIA, both of Fox & Fowle, as well as **Wendy Leventer**, acting president of the 42nd Street Development Project, and **Bill Browning**, director of Green Development Services at the Rocky Mountain Institute.

The irony of designing an energy-efficient structure with huge energy-sucking signs was not lost on this team. Those signs — particularly the 60-foot-square signs on top — seem to have been an extra incentive for the designers to devise energy-saving features throughout the building.

The design team used mostly tried-and-true strategies, as Kaplan explained, but what is important is that so many were incorporated into the same building. Photovoltaics will play an important part; **Douglas Durst**, the developer, was insistent that this progressive technology be incorporated. “He wanted this to be a test that would help the unions and the curtain wall fabricators learn to use the photovoltaics in the skin of the building,” Kaplan said.

On the advice of Natural Resources Defense Council, the team also incorporated fuel cells. Once they are in, the cells will generate electricity on site, and they are clean burning. The only problem is that there will be constant production once they are on, so the architects are trying to figure out how to even out the skewed demand for power inherent in a building occupied only during the day. ConEdison, the Rocky Mountain Institute, Earth Day New York, Green October, and Kiss Cathcart Architects also served as energy consultants to the designers.

Aesthetically, the building has a bit of a split personality, Fowle admitted. On one side, its stone facade reflects the midtown vernacular. On the other, he said, “We took cues from the Nathan’s hot dog building that once occupied the site.” He was also very concerned that the building be illuminated on all sides. “We were conscious that this

building would need to have a nighttime presence as well,” he said. “We didn’t want it to just disappear in the dark.” There is little chance of that. Lighted cornices on the building’s “midtown” side will maintain its after-dark profile, and the huge “total sign” design on the Broadway facade will always be lighted.

One of the biggest tasks the group faced, Kaplan said, was “to come up with a way to communicate the spirit of the building, and create guidelines for the tenants. They will all have their own architects and engineers — and philosophies.” How well the tenants will grasp the spirit of the building remains to be seen, but the design team and the developers are hopeful that the opportunity to be a part of the first green skyscraper in New York will be an inspiration to every one of them.

## Green Can Be Beautiful

by *Kira L. Gould*

Designing with the environment in mind is nothing new, but it’s still not common for the aesthetics of “green materials” to be considered — or celebrated. That’s what the Interiors Committee was doing at the opening reception for “Glamorous Green,” an exhibition at the Material Connexion. More than 300 designers turned out to peruse the selection of materials that are designed to help “green” a project — some meant to mitigate indoor air pollution, others simply manufactured and shipped in more earth-friendly ways than conventional methods.

The exhibition was also bolstered by two events — the first, a design dialogue that posed the question, How green is your pencil? The dis-

### February 13

Submission deadline for the Stewardson Keefe LeBrun travel grants sponsored by the AIA New York Chapter, for travel programs planned for the 1998 calendar year to further the architectural education and professional development of applicants. Applicants must be U.S. citizens and full-time practitioners, either registered or non-registered, with professional architecture degrees. As many as five grants will be awarded, totaling \$15,000. Contact the AIA New York Chapter, 200 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10016, 683-0023, ext. 14.

Submission deadline for the 1998 Haskell Awards for student architectural journalism, sponsored by the New York Foundation for Architecture to encourage fine writing on architecture and related design subjects, and to foster regard for intelligent criticism among future professionals. Applicants must be enrolled in professional architecture or related programs, such as art history, interior design, urban studies, or landscape architecture. A minimum prize or prizes totaling no less than \$1,000 will be awarded. Contact the New York Foundation for Architecture, 200 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10016, 683-0023, ext. 14.

### February 20

Submission deadline for the 1997 GE Edison Award for Lighting Excellence. Open to all professional designers, architects, engineers, and consultants (except GE employees) who have made significant use of GE lamps in the submitted project. Only installations completed between January 1, 1997, and December 31, 1997, may be submitted. Contact the Edison Award Competition, GE Lighting, 1975 Noble Road, #315C, Cleveland, OH, 44112.

### March 2

Application deadline for the New York State Council on the Arts’ architecture, planning, and design program grants of up to \$10,000 for architects, planners, designers, and scholars with specific projects that advance the field and contribute to the public’s understanding of the designed environment. Contact Anne Van Ingen, director of architecture, planning, and design, at 387-7013, or send e-mail to [avaningen@nysca.org](mailto:avaningen@nysca.org).

### March 12

RFP deadline for the exterior memorial dedicated to the African Burial Ground, sponsored by the U.S. General Services Administration. Interested parties must demonstrate ability to design, fabricate, and install the winning proposal, and meet solicitation requirements. Total commission is \$1 million. Contact Pat Wright, GSA Contracting Officer, 26 Federal Plaza, Room 1639, New York, NY 10278, or call Peggy King Jorde at 264-8164.

### April 8

Registration deadline for the 1998 Van Alen Prize in Public Architecture: Design Ideas for New York’s Other River, for projects that investigate the design of New York’s East River and its waterfronts. Cash prizes totaling \$15,000 will be awarded to as many as five finalists. Contact the Van Alen Institute, 30 W. 22nd St., New York, NY 10010, fax 366-5836, or send e-mail to [vanalen@vanalen.org](mailto:vanalen@vanalen.org).

### September 11

Deadline for the Excellence on the Waterfront annual international awards program sponsored by the Waterfront Center, for completed waterfront projects and comprehensive waterfront plans, by citizens, local governments, private developers, design firms, and nonprofit organizations. Contact the Waterfront Center, 1622 Wisconsin Ave., Washington, DC 20007, 202-337-0356, or send e-mail to [waterfront@mindspring.com](mailto:waterfront@mindspring.com).

Scenes from Inauguration and Design Awards Ceremony



Dorothy Alexander

Richard A. Meier, FAIA, and Lorraine Bonaventura, AIA



Dorothy Alexander

Geoffrey Marshall of Turner Construction Co. and Robert Geddes, FAIA



Dorothy Alexander

Jordan Gruzen, FAIA, and Michael Ressner, Assoc. AIA



Christopher Lov

"Glamorous Green" exhibition



Dorothy Alexander

Introduction to Design Day

cussion was organized with the help of O2 New York, a group of industrial designers and others concerned with environmental issues. More than 80 people showed up and divided into groups to talk about how to design in a way that's sympathetic to the planet.

The second event was called "Green Specs." Susan M. Kaplan, AIA, the HLW senior specifier and an authority on environmental materials, discussed the qualities to look for in such materials. She explained, for example, that sometimes an item produced less eco-consciously might be a better choice if it's lighter, smaller, packed more efficiently, and easier to ship than the alternative. This kind of thinking — balancing all the variables — is what makes specing green such a complex task. Joyce Lee, AIA, chair of the Committee on the Environment, talked about 4 Times Square, Fox & Fowle's green skyscraper, and why some big developers are beginning to think about building green.

Shashi Caan, AIA, of Gensler, the chair of the event, was surprised and pleased at the exceptional turnout. Gil Oberfield, AIA, chair of the Interiors Committee and also from Gensler, explained that they were particularly pleased by the number of new faces. "It proves that diversifying the focus of our events can bring in new people," he said. Sponsors for the events included Benjamin Moore, Carnegie, Collins & Aikman, Forbo, Material Connexion, MechoShade, and Steelcase Design Partnership.

Chapter Notes

□ In November, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee met with Al Appleton, a senior fellow at the Regional Plan Association, to talk about the progress of the alternative Gowanus Expressway plan. The idea: Bury the road. It is a tantalizing one. The fabric of a neighborhood was ripped apart by the Gowanus years ago. The road is still seen as a wound, and it is almost universally despised by area residents. The project is one of the quintessential Robert Moses highways that decimated and isolated a whole section of Brooklyn — an act that has had disastrous economic and social consequences. But burying a road is expensive, and the RPA isn't getting too far in convincing the State Department of Transportation that tunneling technology can make it affordable. What can the design community do? The RPA wants designers' help in urging the state to earmark some \$10 million (or possibly as much as \$20 million) to study the issue, even though the "replacement" project on the highway is already under way. "A private company would invest this way in product development," Appleton stressed. "Why aren't we?" A decision about whether to go ahead with the RPA-proposed study is expected this spring.

□ The AIA New York Chapter Interiors Committee hosted Introduction to Design Day in November. The Education subcommittee created this event to give high school students exposure to the practices of architecture, interior design, engineering, and construction. Four groups of 15 or more students (from the New School for the Arts and Sciences,

Stuyvesant High School, and Staten Island Tech) heard presentations and explored the offices of Cosentini Associates, Fox & Fowle, Gensler, Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer, Hillier Group, HLW International, Rockwell Group, Robert A. M. Stern, Tishman Construction, and Tishman Interiors. Collins & Aikman helped fund the effort. Architects interested in participating in next year's program should call Nora Coffey at Tishman Interiors, 399-3601, or send e-mail to coffey@tishman.com.

□ On behalf of the Chapter's Governors Island Task Force, Sarelle Weisberg, FAIA, and Suzanne Wertz, AIA, presented comments at the public scoping meeting for the environmental review of the disposition of Governors Island, which took place on December 16.

□ Deborah Berke, AIA, Susan Chin, AIA, Randolph R. Croxton, FAIA, Mary Jean Eastman, AIA, and Robert Geddes, FAIA, were elected by the architect members of the Chapter to serve on the 1998 Nominating Committee. They will select the new members of the 1999 Board of Directors, as well as the members of the Chapter's elected committees (Fellows, Finance, Honors, and Oculus) and the Chapter members of the New York Foundation for Architecture's board of trustees.

## New Year, New Leadership: Kudos to the Winners

by Kira L. Gould

The elegance and legacy of the Seagram building was the setting for the Inauguration and Design Awards ceremony, when the AIA New York Chapter — the oldest and largest in the country — marked the departure of **Robert Geddes**, FAIA, as president, and welcomed his successor, **Rolf H. Ohlhausen**, FAIA, for the 1998 term. Geddes reminded the assembled that two major initiatives were under way: Crosstown 116, the collaboration between the Chapter, HUD, and the City College of New York; and the search for a new Chapter headquarters. This discussion was the perfect segue to Ohlhausen's talk. He reminded members that the purpose of the Chapter — to serve members, to educate the public, and to promote design excellence — could ultimately be served by new premises. He congratulated the 24 program committees, whom he called the "lifeblood" of the Chapter. The 1997 Board was recognized and the 1998 Board members were welcomed, and then **Lorraine Bonaventura**, AIA, chair of the Design Awards Committee, presented the plaques to the winners of this year's awards (*Oculus*, December 1997, pp. 19–20). A little grumbling about repeat winners — Richard Meier's firm won five awards, which he was on hand to accept — quickly subsided.

## Letters to *Oculus*

Re: "Architect Abuse" in the November issue (page 7):

According to Jayne Merkel, the interiors of the new Getty are not only a violation of taste, but of professional ethics, the sanctity of art, and the whole field of architecture itself. Who knew a few yards of fabric could draw down such a storm of Fountainheadism — from a journalist, from an architectural journalist, and at this late date? Of course it's a lot of hot air. The sad thing would be for readers of *Oculus* to accept the implied characterization of the client as a bunch of whimsical pomo posers with a thing for swishy decor. The attempt to rethink conventions of exhibition has not been undertaken thoughtlessly. However, it turns out, the Getty merits praise for encouraging its curators to experiment, rather than settling for absolutist dogma descended from on high.

*Kevin McMahon, SCI-Arc,  
Los Angeles*

To: Ms. Jayne Merkel, Editor

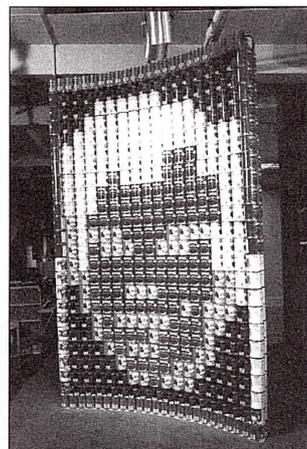
Dear Jayne: Just read your editorial in the Volume 60, Number 3, November 1997 issue of *Oculus* on Page 7 on "Architect Abuse." Bravo!!! I cannot believe I have not read this from anyone else on the Getty Museum that Thierry Despont designed the interior furnishes instead of Richard Meier. I also agree this is a travesty not only for architects, but for the piece of architecture, i.e., Getty Museum, that he created. Thank you for so eloquently bringing this issue to the forefront.

Cordially,  
*John R. Sorrenti, FAIA,  
1997 AIA Vice President*

## Corrections

The acronym of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, CCA, was misprinted in the January 1998 story on John Hejduk's retrospective exhibition there (page 6). *Oculus* apologizes to Dean Hejduk, the director, staff, and trustees of the CCA, and to the organizers of the show.

Our coverage of CANstruction, also in the January issue (page 20), omitted the name of juror **Paul Goldberger** (of all people) and of the sponsors, the New York Chapter of the AIA, the Society of Design Administrators, and the New York Design Center, as well as that of **Cheri Melillo** of **Butler Rogers Baskett**, who chairs the New York event and serves as national coordinator for similar competitions nationwide. In addition, the wrong photograph was used to illustrate the winning project by **John M. Y. Lee/Michael Timchula Architects**, *Anatomy of a Can*. The correct image is printed in the margin. *Oculus* apologizes and apologizes and apologizes.



Kevin Wick

*Best use of labels, Anatomy of a Can,  
John M. Y. Lee/Michael Timchula  
Architects*

**February 4, 8:00 am**  
*Architecture for Justice*

**February 4, 5:30 pm**  
*Public Architects*

**February 5, 8:30 am**  
*Professional Practice*

**February 9, 6:30 pm**  
*Learning By Design:NY*

**February 10, 6:00 pm**  
*Design Awards*

**February 11, 6:00 pm**  
*Marketing and Public Relations*

**February 12, 6:00 pm**  
*Environment*

**February 18, 12:30 pm**  
*Architecture for Justice*

**February 20, 8:00 am**  
*Zoning and Urban Design*

**February 25, 6:00 pm**  
*Women in Architecture*

**February 25, 6:00 pm**  
*Architecture Dialogue*

*Please confirm meeting times and locations.*

## BOOK LIST

### Urban Center Books' Top 10

As of December 30, 1997

1. **Josip Plečnik: An Architect of Prague Castle**, Zdenek Lukés (Prague Castle, cloth, \$150.00).
2. **Manhattan in Maps, 1556-1990**, Paul Cohen (Rizzoli, cloth, \$50.00).
3. **Renzo Piano: Log Book**, Renzo Piano (Monacelli Press, paper, \$29.95).
4. **1,000 Chairs**, Charlotte Fiell (Taschen, paper, \$29.95).
5. **An Atlas of Rare City Maps**, Melville Branch (Princeton Architectural Press, cloth, \$60.00).
6. **Rebirth of Bryant Park**, J. W. Thompson (Spacemaker, paper, \$19.95).
7. **Hiding**, Mark C. Taylor (University of Chicago Press, paper, \$29.95).
8. **Le Corbusier: Architecte-Artiste**, Fondation Le Corbusier (Infinitum, CD-ROM, \$125.00).
9. **Three Concepts**, Peter Zumthor (Birkhauser Verlag, paper, \$39.50).
10. **Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge**, Alberto Perez-Gomez, (MIT Press, cloth, \$50.00).

### Perimeter Books on Architecture's Top 10

As of December 30, 1997

1. **El Croquis 85: Wiel Arets** (El Croquis, paper, \$44.00).
2. **The Work of Charles and Ray Eames**, Donald Albrecht et al. (Abrams and Vitra Design Museum, cloth, \$49.50).
3. **Translations from Drawing to Building and Other Essays**, Robin Evans (MIT Press, paper, \$25.00).
4. **Ando Details II**, Yukio Futagawa and Francesco Dal Co (ADA Edita Tokyo, paper, \$48.00).
5. **Jean Michel Frank**, Leopold Diego Sanchez (Edition du Regard, cloth, \$97.00).
6. **Carlo Scarpa**, Hiroshi Saito (TOTO, cloth, \$105.00).
7. **Le Cabanon Le Corbusier**, Magdi Senadji (Marval, paper, \$17.50).
8. **Visual Explanations**, Eduard R. Tufte (Graphics Press, cloth, \$45.00).
9. **Paradise Transformed**, Guy Cooper and Gordon Taylor (Monacelli Press, cloth, \$50.00).
10. **Robert Smithson Slide Works**, Guglielmo Bargellesi-Severi (Carlo Frua, paper, \$40.00).

### Rizzoli Bookstores' Top 10

As of December 24, 1997

1. **Architecture Pack**, Ron van der Meer and Deyan Sudjic (Knopf, cloth, \$50.00).
2. **Bridges**, Judith Dupre (Workman Publishing, cloth, \$22.98).
3. **American House Now**, Susan Doubilet and Daralice Boles (Universe, paper, \$25.00).
4. **Skyscrapers**, Judith Dupre (Workman Publishing, cloth, \$22.98).
5. **Art of Venice**, Gianni Romanelli (Könemann, cloth, \$99.98).
6. **Kohn Pedersen Fox, 1986-1992**, Warren James (Rizzoli, paper, \$42.50).
7. **Manor Houses of Normandie**, Régis Faucon and Yves Lescaort (Könemann, cloth, \$39.98).
8. **Life and Work of Luis Barragan**, Jose Julbez (Rizzoli, cloth, \$50.00).
9. **An Atlas of Rare City Maps**, Melville Branch (Princeton Architectural Press, cloth, \$60.00).
10. **Cuba, 400 Years of Architectural Heritage**, Rachel Carley (Watson Guptil, cloth, \$49.95).

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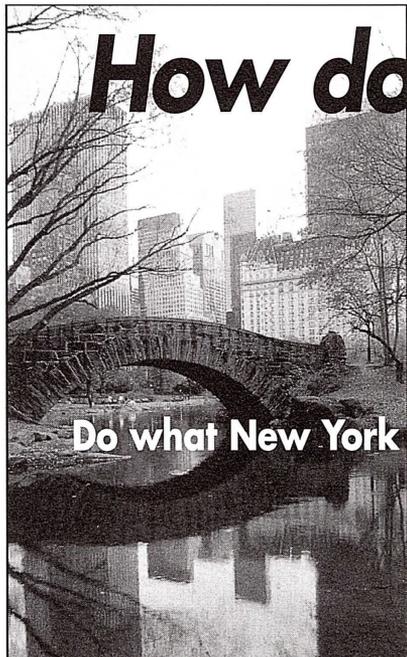
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**Crosstown 116—Bringing Habitat II Home, from Istanbul to Harlem.** *City College of New York School of Architecture and Environmental Studies, Shepard Hall, room 104, 140th Street and Convent Avenue. 650-8745. Closes March 3.*

**A. G. Rizzoli: Architect of Magnificent Visions.** *Museum of American Folk Art, Eva and Morris Feld Gallery, 2 Lincoln Sq. 595-9533. Closes March 8.*

**Signs and Wonders: The Spectacular Lights of Times Square.** *The New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St. 873-0509. Closes March 8.*

**Times Square: Then and Now.** *The New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St. 873-0509. Closes March 8.*

**Precedent and Invention: New Courthouses in Historic Settings.** *Federal Courthouse, 500 Pearl Street at Foley Square. 683-0023, ext. 21. Closes March 15.*

**Robert Adam, the Creative Mind: From Sketch to the Finished Drawing.** *Frick Collection, 1 East 70th Street. Closes April 5.*

**New York from Above: An Aerial View.** *Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave. 534-1672. Closes June 14.*

**Bridging New York.** *Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave. 534-1672. Closes June 28.*

**The New Metropolis: A Century of Greater New York, 1898-1998.** *Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave. 534-1672. Closes January 3, 1999.*

February

**10**

*Tuesday*

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT  
Exhibition: Crosstown 116 –  
Bringing Habitat II Home,  
From Istanbul to Harlem**

Sponsored by the AIA New York Chapter and City College of New York. 6:00 pm. City College School of Architecture and Environmental Studies, Shepard Hall, room 104 140th St. and Convent Ave. RSVP 683-0023, ext.21. Free.

**12**

*Thursday*

**Lecture: The Sydney Shelov Lecture**

By Bernard Tschumi. Sponsored by Pratt Institute. 6:00 pm. Fourth floor, Steuben Hall, 200 Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn. 718-399-4304.

**14**

*Saturday*

**Tour: A Valentine for Stanford White**

By Francis Morrone. Sponsored by the Municipal Art Society. 1:00 pm. Madison Avenue and 26th Street. 935-3960. \$15.

**17**

*Tuesday*

**Exhibition: Architectonica,  
The Times Square Project**

Sponsored by the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution. 2 E. 91st St. 849-8300. Closes May 10.

**Tour: A Private Tour of Public Buildings**

By Adrienne Bresnan, FAIA, and James S. Kaplan. Sponsored by the 92nd Street YM-YWHA. 1:30 pm. Call 996-1100 to register. \$15.

**18**

*Wednesday*

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT  
Symposium: Bringing Crosstown 116  
Back to the United Nations**

Sponsored by the AIA New York Chapter and City College of New York. 6:00 pm. United Nations Headquarters, Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium. RSVP by Feb. 12 to 683-0023, ext.21. Free. (4 CES/LUs)

**18**

*Wednesday*

**Lecture: Alvar Aalto Centennial**

By Elina Standerskjold and Markku Lahti. Sponsored by Pratt Institute. 3:00 pm. Higgins Hall, room 111, 200 Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn. 718-399-4304.

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT**

**Reception and Lecture:**

**The Business of Design Benefits**

By Peter Lawrence. Sponsored by the Interiors Committee and the International Interior Design Association. 5:15 pm. 200 Lexington Ave., sixteenth floor. RSVP 683-0023, ext. 21. \$10 per session or \$35 for four-part series (\$15 per session for nonmembers). (4 CES/LUs per session)

**19**

*Thursday*

**Lecture: Juhani Pallasmaa**

Sponsored by Pratt Institute. 6:00 pm. Steuben Hall, fourth floor, 200 Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn. 718-399-4304.

**Lecture: Arquitectonica and  
the New Times Square**

By Bernardo Fort-Brescia, FAIA, and Laurinda Spear, FAIA. Sponsored by the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution. 6:30 pm. 2 E. 91st St. RSVP 849-8380. \$15.

**Lecture: The City Transformed,  
Alternatives to the New York Style,  
1890-1920**

By Barry Lewis. Sponsored by Cooper Union and the New York Transit Museum. 6:30 pm. Wollman Auditorium, 51 Astor Pl. at Third Ave. 353-4195. \$18.

**20**

*Friday*

**AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT  
Seminar: How Should Architects  
Approach the Press?**

Sponsored by the Marketing and Public Relations Committee. 8:00 am. 200 Lexington Ave., sixteenth floor. RSVP 683-0023, ext. 21. \$30 per class, \$100 for four classes, or \$200 for eight classes. (4 CES/LUs)

**20**

*Friday*

**Lecture: Fragile Dwelling**

By Margaret Morton and Alan Trachtenberg. Sponsored by the Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture, Columbia University GSAPP. 12:30 pm. Avery Hall, room 114, Columbia University. 854-8165.

**22**

*Sunday*

**Tour: Centennial Cities**

Sponsored by the Museum of the City of New York and Big Onion Walking Tours. 1:00 pm. Nathan Hale Statue, Broadway and Murray St. 534-1672, ext. 206. \$15.

**23**

*Monday*

**Class: Healthcare Design Project**

By Tama Duffy. Sponsored by the NYU School of Continuing Education. 6:00 pm. 790-1362.

**25**

*Wednesday*

**Lecture: The Fruits of Consolidation –  
Space and Symbol, The Great Beaux-  
Arts Buildings of New York**

By Francis Morrone. Sponsored by the Municipal Art Society. 6:00 pm. Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. RSVP 935-3960. \$10.

**26**

*Thursday*

**Symposium: Manhattan –  
Diversity and the Creation of Culture,  
Exploring the Metropolis**

Sponsored by the Museum of the City of New York. 6:00 pm. 1220 Fifth Ave. Advance registration required. 534-1672, ext. 206.

**Lecture: Beaux-Arts New York –  
Planned Neighborhoods and Garden  
Suburbs, 1910-1925**

By Barry Lewis. Sponsored by Cooper Union and the New York Transit Museum. 6:30 pm. Wollman Auditorium, 51 Astor Pl. at Third Ave. 353-4195. \$18.

March

**3**

*Tuesday*

**Lecture: Google, Fifties Coffee Shop  
Architecture**

By Alan Hess. Sponsored by Cooper Union. 6:30 pm. Hewitt Building Auditorium, Third Ave. between 6th and 7th sts. 353-4195. \$8 in advance or \$10 at the door.

**5**

*Thursday*

**Lecture: Art Deco New York –  
The New York Skyscraper and Its  
European Roots, 1920-1930**

By Barry Lewis. Sponsored by Cooper Union and the New York Transit Museum. 6:30 pm. Wollman Auditorium, 51 Astor Pl. at Third Ave. 353-4195. \$18.

**6**

*Friday*

**Lecture: Reality Effect,  
Apparatus Effect, Architecture Effect –  
The Geography of the  
Spectator in City Films**

By Pellegrino d'Acerno and John Rajchman. Sponsored by the Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture, Columbia University GSAPP. 12:30 pm. Avery Hall, room 114, Columbia University. 854-8165.

**10**

*Tuesday*

**Class: Why Are We Building So Many  
Inappropriate Healthcare Facilities?**

By Steven P. Nohe, Sr. Sponsored by the NYU School of Continuing Education. 6:00 pm. 790-1362.

**Lecture: The Architectural Legacy of  
Alvar Aalto: A Critical Discussion.**

By Steven Holl, Patricia Patkau, Juhani Pallasmaa, and Colin St. John Wilson. Sponsored by the Museum of Modern Art and the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts. 6:30 pm. 11 W. 53rd St. 708-9781. \$8.

**Lecture: Viva Las Vegas**

By Alan Hess. Sponsored by Cooper Union. 6:30 pm. Hewitt Building Auditorium, Third Ave. between 6th and 7th sts. 353-4195. \$8 in advance or \$10 at the door.

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