EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS SETS ITS SITES ON QUALITY AND SAFETY IN ELECTRICAL CONSTRUCTION.

Local 103 IBEW and NECA set the standard for excellence in electrical and telecom projects throughout Greater Boston.

In the world of construction, quality and safety are critical to every project. That is why leading architects, general contractors, building owners, and facility managers throughout Eastern Massachusetts rely on the skilled union electricians of Local 103 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) and the professional electrical contractors of the Greater Boston Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA).

For more than a century, IBEW and NECA have literally helped build our region. From our most cherished historical sites and renowned educational institutions, to major transportation projects, leading technology companies, community schools, and libraries, our landmarks shed light on a century of electrical construction unsurpassed in quality.

Rely on the power of quality electrical work. Call 1-877-NECA-IBEW for a complete directory of NECA Greater Boston Chapter Members, or visit us at www.bostonneca.org.

Visit us at Build Boston, Booth #309, November 18-20

www.ibew103.com (877)NECA-IBEW (632-2423) www.bostonneca.org
Architects are at their most pathetic when they scramble to justify their existence. Knowing desperately to be all things to all people, they defend their ability to "add" even as they produce increasingly idiosyncratic work and pursue the peculiar art of disengaging themselves from popular culture. If they paid more attention to popular culture, they might discover that society really does want architects. In the public is quite clear about what it wants from architects: beautiful buildings mean something.

This, of course, is the sticking point. Many architects would protest that their buildings do have meaning. The problem is that the public isn't interested in the means they're offering.

An unyielding focus on the World Trade Center site offers insight on what the public does want and therefore offers an unprecedented opportunity to define the future of architecture. Those who viewed the public rejection of the development proposals as a call for bold new design missed the point. The public was clamoring for a 1,776-foot building, not for technical gymnastics, nor the rebranding of the New York skyline. The public wanted a building that said something profound about the terrible things that had happened, a building that asked questions about life, death, and the human condition.

That kind's stalagmites will someday be viewed as a circa 2000 period piece. They have more historical significance if they can also be viewed as the moment when architecture re-entered the architectural lexicon and when architects reached deep into history to rediscover the roots of the impetus to build. In honoring the site and the towers as sacred ground, we are following an instinct as old as humankind. In trying to build high, we are following an urge almost as old, to reach skyward and beyond our own limitations.

It is hard to talk about spirit. Instead, we use words like awe, mystery, joy, the sublime. Spirit is sometimes about religion, but not always. It is sometimes about nature, but not always. We talk about human spirit and community spirit, but so acknowledge spiritual forces greater than ourselves. The question of how to design places that have the power to sustain and nurture a sense of spirit without being mere theater is a difficult but worthy one.

We live in uncertain times. But as architect Julian Bonder notes in these pages, we certainly should not lead us to think that we should represent uncertainty or meaninglessness through buildings and landscapes. Uncertainty should lead us to a certain purpose, and choice is not 'whatever.'

Design is to make choices. We can choose to pursue the stylistic tours-de-force that are now available to us through new technologies and new materials. Or we can use a much tougher assignment: to put those tools to a higher purpose, to make things of enduring meaning.

Beth S. Padjen FAIA
Your July/August issue featuring Peabody Terrace truly hit home with me. I lived there for two years and found my own experiences and observations reflected in your articles, especially the idea that it is a building loved by architects and hated by almost everyone else.

I’m no architect, and I was almost in tears when I first saw my third-floor apartment. Still squinting from the bright August sun, I looked at the box-cluttered interior and could only think, “It’s so dark and ugly!”

Even when my eyes adjusted to the dim light, I saw little to improve my first impression. It was always dark inside, even on the sunniest days. The flooring was also dark, a speckled charcoal grey linoleum. It hid dirt so well that I often lost my dust pile as I was sweeping, and to get down on my hands and knees to find it again, a mountain of dust rising as I was sweeping.

I looked at the box-cluttered interior and could hardly believe that concrete, poured on a patchwork frame of cheap plywood and showing joint lines, blots, and even little “footballs” where knots in the wood had been pegged and built-in units, which made furniture placement a challenge. Walls were full of odd little outcroppings and built-in units, which made furniture placement a challenge. Closets were small, rooms were small, and the kitchen seemed to be an afterthought, stuck haphazardly onto one of the living-room walls. Faced with a two-by-two stove and four feet of counter space, I mourned the full, sunny kitchen I had left behind.

Inside and out, I found it to be a tacky, ugly little place, reminiscent of 1960s public housing projects. I didn’t think anyone could disagree, but at a dinner party I realized I was wrong. I was sighing about my new home to my table companion; he was an architect and was truly shocked that I could be anything less than delighted to have the honor of living in Peabody Terrace. “But it was designed by Sert!” he cried. “And it’s still small, dark, and ugly!” I replied. His parting words to me, in a tone of earnest pity, were: “I hope you come to appreciate living in Peabody Terrace.”

I never came to honor the space as he did. I can honestly say I came to appreciate its aspects of the space: the neatness of its smoothly incorporating varied apartment sizes and therefore varied family sizes, like many interlocking puzzle pieces; the way integrated home space, child care, play and common space and park areas into the community of apartments; it truly made the space it occupied and the surroundings area.

I even came to love parts of it, esp. my balcony, which was at tree-crown level and faced a maple-lined walkway to the Charles. It was breezy and cool in the summer and brilliant in the autumn, and always gave a peaceful place to view the Charles.

I’m living in Arizona now, drenched in sunlight and seeking dark shady spaces. I read your last issue. I felt a wave of nostalgia and affection for my old home. I may not come to love it as architects seem to, but I can appreciate the beauty of its design. If that beauty could have incorporated beauty as defined by the community, it could be a building loved by all. I suppose that is the ongoing challenge of architectural design.

Christa Torrens
Cottonwood, Arizona

The juxtaposition of the love/hate article about Peabody Terrace in your July/August 2003 issue is an excellent illustration of the case in other fine arts, where not the client, but the profession is the primary concern of the future of the architectural profession. I believe that architects, as is case in other fine arts, have lost the consensus — not the client, but the architect. Although there is popular appreciation for the amenities of post-World War II built work, there is little affection for the architecture. Popular affection for a product leads to demand. If architectural consumers start to appreciate architects again, they will demand and architectural clients will provide it.

This is the design challenge for the architect of the 21st century.

Willy Sciaris AIA
President, Wingate Real Estate Strategies
Needham, Massachusetts
schools are not providing sufficient education in the areas of the building enclosure and relevant building science. Practitioners in the field find that their staffs often don't understand the principles governing the design of building envelopes and the control of heat, air, and moisture (both liquid and vapor). The schools should be educating architects about the principles and technology of indoor air quality. The envelope system, which conditions the interior space, is an integral part of the building enclosure and building science.

Your roundtable discussion, "Declaring Victory: Practicing and Teaching" [September/October 2003], was a refreshing insight into teaching by practitioners. Your comment that the "old battle" isn't being fought anymore between the profession and the academy is very true.

An unofficial cease-fire started when our five national architecture organizations — AIA, AIAS, NCARB, ACSA and NAAB ("the collaterals") — came together to commission the report Building Community, a New Future for Architecture and Practice, researched and written by Ernest Boyer and Lee Mitgang of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Since the publication of Building Community, the collaterals have studied its text and each sees itself reflected in the criticism and praise. As a result, much has changed since 1996. The academy and the profession have developed more open communication as demonstrated by your panel of practicing educators. Nearly 100 submissions for the NCARB prize for the Creative Integration of Practice and Education in the Academy have been received. Schools have much more diverse faculty and student bodies now, even though the profession has not kept pace.

The climate for learning presented by your panel was very encouraging in its respect for students. This is in great contrast to the message in the recent publication, "The redesign of Studio Culture — A Report of the AIAS Studio Culture Task Force" by the American Institute of Architects Students. The report claims that the existing studio culture, mythical or not, can "lead to emotional, physical, and cultural deprivation." Perhaps the difference between the approach to teaching by your panel members and that described by the AIAS Task Force is that the panel members are all bringing the culture of practice to the classroom. That is often not the case.

I believe neither practice nor the academy can claim victory; rather, both should continue to recognize the strengths they can bring to one another.

Peter Steffan FAIA, NCARB
Chairman, Steffian Bradley Architects
Boston

As one who has recently finished the internship and registration exam process, I enjoyed reading the conversation between John Cary, Jr. and Jeff Stein ["Hearing Voices," September/October 2003]. It reminded me of the process I went through to become licensed.

Following the internship system established by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, a certain number of training units are required in each area. Once I knocked off all 700 total units from the 16 assorted categories, I was suddenly "educated" enough to take a licensing exam. It always struck me as amusing that I could achieve competency in the Programming training category after 10 training units and that it would take only 15 units to understand Engineering Systems Coordination. How does this account for our individual educational backgrounds? How can this system differentiate between the concepts which I learned quickly as opposed to those with which I struggled?

No feedback is given to those who have taken the test; all you receive is a pass or fail. I didn't feel any more or less competent to do my job once I received nine results that told me that I had passed an exam. I could now call myself an architect. But what had I actually learned from the entire process?

The inability to measure your true progress and development as a professional is perhaps one of the greatest shortcomings of the entire internship system. Each of us learns and processes information differently. I'm not suggesting that we do away with exams, but I am suggesting there needs to be a fundamental change in the way we ensure that all architects are exposed to some standard body of knowledge and concepts. It is appropriate that young designers have come together under the ArchVoices umbrella to make our voices heard. Kudos to those who contribute their time and energy to these informative, weekly newsletters.

Jessica Zlotogora AIA
New England Regional Associate Director,
National Associates Committee
TSOII/Kobus & Associates
Cambridge, Massachusetts

We want to hear from you. Letters may be e-mailed to epedjen@architects.org or sent to: ArchitectureBoston
52 Broad St., Boston, MA 02109.

Letters may be edited for clarity and length and must include your name, address, and daytime telephone number. Length should not exceed 300 words.
Custom Windows and Entryways
Commercial/Residential/Institutional

- Traditional New England Styles
- Historic Reproductions
- Mortise & Tenon Construction
- 7/8" True Divided Light Muntins
- Casement, Awning and Inswing Hopper Windows
- Double Hung/Single Hung Windows
- Weight & Pulley Balance System
- Invisible Block & Tackle System
- Roll Down Screens
- French Door & Raised Panel Door Units
- In House Custom CNC Tooling

Come see us at Build Boston 2003, Booth #965.

KSD
CUSTOM WOOD PRODUCTS, INC.
102 High Street.
Boscawen, NH 03303
Phone: (603) 796-2951
Fax: (603) 796-2133
ksdcwp@aol.com
www.ksdcwp.com

WENTWORTH INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
100 Years of Leadership in Technology

Architect,
will you meet the new requirement?

Build up your credits and draw on our experience!

We offer AIA-approved seminars that meet the new Massachusetts license renewal requirements.

For more information log on to:
www.wit.edu/aia
or call
617-989-4310
The Wideck for the ceiling of the Padre Pio Centre was chosen for both its aesthetic and acoustical properties. We felt the linear design of the Wideck panels helped to carry the eye forward towards the altar, and that the ceiling’s geometry ideally complemented the exposed wood and steel roof trusses.

Paul D. Feldei, AIA
The Architectural Studio, Allentown, PA
Introducing FormaBond®

The world’s first formed ACM panel ready to install in just one step.

Until now, thin metal composite panels cost you time and money. You had to bid the material, bid the fabrication, manage the logistics and sweat the details.

But now, for the same buck you spent on a piecemealed panel and a lot less of your time, you can get FormaBond – the world's first, metal composite panel, pre-formed in just one step, with premium dry-seal joinery.

**FormaBond is easier**: Pre-formed panels mean you’re ready to install with one call

**FormaBond is healthier**: Proven joinery minimizes the possibility of water penetration and mold growth

**FormaBond is safer**: Passes missile impact test to Florida requirements

Standard core satisfies the fire resistance requirements for any building height

FormaBond. Simply A Better Form Of ACM.™

Call or visit CENTRIA.com for details.

CENTRIA
North America 1.800.759.7474
International 1.412.299.8240
Did You Know...

Marvin Windows and Doors preserves and protects the environment?

How?...By recycling wood...and lots of it!

- Marvin purchases raw lumber from suppliers with sound forest management practices, who subscribe to the Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI), promoting good forest stewardship.
- 6,000 tons of packaging and logging wood heats Marvin’s plants!
- 19,000 tons of wood shavings are shipped to the poultry industry for bedding, as well as to product manufacturers for products such as organic mulch!
Participants:

Phyllis Andersen is a Fellow for Cultural Landscape Studies of the Landscape Institute of the Arnold Arboretum in Boston and a member of the editorial board of ArchitectureBoston.

Julian Bonder, Assoc. AIA, established Julian Bonder + Associates in Cambridge, Massachusetts, after practicing architecture in Argentina for ten years. He is an associate professor at Roger Williams University and the 2003-2004 Hyde Chair at the University of Nebraska.

Steven G. Cecil AIA, ASLA is a principal of The Cecil Group in Boston, a multi-disciplinary architecture, urban design, and landscape architecture firm.

Gary Hilderbrand is a principal of Reed/Hilderbrand Landscape Architects in Watertown, Massachusetts and an adjunct professor of landscape architecture at Harvard Design School.

The Reverend Bruce Jenneker is an associate rector and precentor at Trinity Church in Boston.

Henry Moss AIA is a principal at Bruner/Cott & Associates in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Elizabeth Padjen FAIA is the editor of ArchitectureBoston.

Elizabeth Padjen: There has been a lot of discussion in the last 15 years or so about memorials, which has obviously become more intense as the debate about the World Trade Center site continues. I'm struck by the thought that the conversation about memorials offers a kind of justification for talking about architecture in a way that is quite different from the way we've been allowed — or trained — to talk about design. The discussion of memorials has allowed us to talk about making places that somehow transcend what we normally build, places that reach for bigger ideas than those that have occupied most architects recently — ideas about the nature of the human spirit and existence. The critic Robert Morgan wrote recently that postmodernism is fundamentally about the denial of transcendence; transcendence, he said, requires the context of time and history. We frequently talk about the age of irony, of cynicism, of relativism — all those things that define the modern age, all of which limit our ability to understand context deeply. Have we stripped ourselves of a vocabulary for talking about building and therefore for designing the environment in a more thoughtful, maybe richer, way?

Steven Cecil: I think “transcendence” is a good word, particularly in New England, with its tradition of transcendentalism. But trying to frame conversation about spirit is a little bit like catching butterflies with a fishing net. It’s not certain that talking about the experience of spirit in architecture is in fact the way to get at the problem.

Elizabeth Padjen: You’re right — it’s very hard to capture. And that’s why, I think, words like awe and wonder and mystery end up coming into the conversation.

Julian Bonder: Architecture is always more interesting when it deals with something
beyond what we actually see. Adolf Loos made the
perceptive observation that when we find a mound in
a forest that is six feet by three feet, we become
auspicious and something in us says, someone was
interred here. That is architecture, he said. The idea
of an unknown person is buried there confronts us
with death, with that inevitable condition that we are
going to go away from this earth. Loos also
suggested that only a small part of architecture
goes to art: the tomb and the monument. These
structures don't represent a formal design problem or
a functional problem; they represent reminders of
an ethical question that has to do with something
beneath our feet. The places that have the kind of spirit
are discussing transcend themselves; they suggest
something beyond themselves.

ERY MOSS: In preparation for this
discussion, I tried to think of places that have this
d of power. And I noticed that they fell into three
categories. In the first group were a couple of Civil
War battlefields: Cold Harbor and Antietam.
Cold Harbor is only a cluster of trenches on one side
of a field and a couple of Park Service plaques that
remind you that 5,000 people were killed in seven
minutes as they charged these trenches. There's really
nothing there. And so if you don't know any of this,
place doesn't mean anything. It was easy to think
of these kinds of semi-erased places in which you
are all these stacked-up, hard-to-get-at histories that
rich but are somehow connected to death. I
thought, what about monuments to life? Grand
Central Station came to me; that's a great terminus
with anonymous people moving back and forth
through it over long periods of time. And then I
remembered something that Elizabeth Padjen once
told me at a conference about religious properties — she
was talking about communal, tranquil places, and
so rare they are. Churches offer that — the
posite of Grand Central. Is it a particular kind of
space that makes them so effective, or is it simply
that being with other people in a tranquil way is so
rare? The third category had associations with
important people, for example, Emily Dickinson's
house. If you know what happened there, it's very
moving. If you don't know what happened there, it's
just another house in Amherst, Massachusetts. So for
me, the issue constantly comes back to time and
history, and the part that interests me most is the
question whether there's not enough of this genius
loci, whatever it is. And if there's not enough, what
kind of spirit is missing most? It seems to me that
you've got to connect to a place to have any of these
experiences. Maybe people aren't as connected as
they once were because they have lost time — they're
moving faster through spaces; they don't live a
whole lifetime in one place. We have all talked a lot
about how one makes a monument at Ground Zero.
I wonder about the opposite. Can you make a
monument for places pulsing with life?

ELIZABETH PADJEN: I have noticed that
we don't celebrate birthplaces the way we used to.
We're all talking about memorials now, death places,
but birthplaces aren't places that crowds go to. I agree
with you on many points. You can look at the
Vietnam Memorial in Washington. If you don't have
knowledge, it's a big, shiny retaining wall. As I went
through a similar exercise, I wondered about the
ocean — what is it about the sea that often provokes
a spiritual reaction? Standing on a beach, looking
north toward Portugal, you see nothing. That's one
experience, and it does suggest infinity, eternity, and
the power of nature. But the piece of coast that
means more to me is Salem Sound, which I've lived
near most of my life. What is interesting about the
Sound is that when you look across the water, you
also see land, you see structures, you even see some
vistas that haven't changed substantially in a century
or more, and so you're seeing layers of history. And
when you know something about it, it is a place that acquires meaning. You know about the number of shipwrecks there. You know the tragedies. You know about the people who set off from that place to go to China and other parts of the world. These layers of information piled on top of this landscape make it special.

**Phyllis Andersen:** Do you think that has to do with the relationship of geological formation to architecture — to the ability both have to invoke similar responses of awe and wonder? For example, the place names of Yosemite have religious overtones, sometimes even terms that relate to religious architecture, such as Cathedral Rock. It's a point that John Sears makes in his book Sacred Places [see page 61]. I have a similar reaction to yours — the coastal sites that I find really powerful are all those with some sort of relationship to the human form, but also an overwhelming geological formation — the Côte Sauvage in Brittany and the Maine coast, for example.

**Gary Hildrebrand:** It strikes me that one could group these kinds of evocations into two categories. One is rooted in knowledge, where your response to a place is a function of something you know, which you can translate into feeling. But Yosemite is an example of a place that elicits an almost unconditioned response that has almost nothing to do with knowledge. Actually, the notion of the unconditioned response is more of a 19th-century idea; I think many people today would say that the observer is never really "unconditioned." But I believe that the unconditioned response is still possible and, as a landscape architect, I find that it's quite crucial in our work. We can elicit qualities and characteristics that are moving and emotive that don't require a learned response. And so the comment about transcendence requiring context and history is troublesome to me. I think it is possible to have a transcendent experience without a lot of conditioning, simply through the manipulation of elements like the breeze and the sun, light, humidity, and the horizon, for example. The best example I can point to is a Modernist one: the work of Luis Barragán. His acceptance address after winning the Pritzker Prize in 1980, he gave an incredible evocation about the things that were important in his work, that he felt mainly were qualities of transcendence that could indeed be built into works, and to which he believed you could have an almost universal response. He used words like "calm" and "serenity," which were the qualities he sought. Universality itself is a Modernist notion, something we'd now see as a 20th-century idea. But the medium of landscape can produce those qualities without dependence on historical context or prior experience.

**Julian Bonder:** Which brings up the story of Barragán's contribution to Kahn's Salk Institute courtyard, which at some point in the design was full of trees. It was Barragán who suggested leaving it open to the sky and to the Pacific.

**Gary Hildrebrand:** Louis Kahn was another figure in that mid-century period who sought to correct what we might call a bankruptcy of interest in the emotive.

**Bruce Jenneker:** This is a hard conversation to dig up vocabulary for, as we're all finding. I had to push to find the vocabulary after September 11, because immediately after September 11 and continuing even until now, the number of people who have turned to us for a more serious engagement of the life of faith has increased phenomenally. I think some of that is because so many of these are younger people who are in their late 20s and early 30s — their parents went to Woodstock and in the process discovered for
nselves a vocabulary, but divested themselves of a native history, of a mythological context, of a abulary for ritual. And so we have a number of ple who don't have a vocabulary for certain kinds experiences; the best they can do is to say that thing is awe-inspiring. But they want more than t. They come to a special place or a special asion and they say, ”I am convinced this means thing.” Help me unpack that meaning.” There is panese aphorism that says, ”The integrity of a el is the space it encloses.” And the challenge for ple like us — since I'm a designer, too, even ugh what I design with isn't as tangible and as ing as what some of you design with — is the pation to insist upon the validity of the vessel. It's the space that the vessel encloses that has thing, whether it's the mound in the wood or m Sound. Phyllis mentioned geology. There's the logy of stones and there's the archaeology of erience. And so the space of Salem Sound means thing not because ships left from there. It means thing because hearts were pulled in that place. If you stand there in the place of a torn heart and en you don't have the vocabulary for that erience, it doesn't matter whether you know that ple left for China from there. But if you erstand what the space evokes, then suddenly find yourself in a place where you say, ”Aha, this it means to be human.” Ultimately, that's it people want to work out: what it means to be man. I think the manipulation of space, event, e, and context can attack and demolish the ess whereby that evocation happens, as much as an serve it splendidly. We are in need of a abulary for the interpretation of the gifts of ascendance that come to us, and we who are igners must serve that need. I of course see it as a gious opportunity, but it is an artistic opportunity, too.

**Elizabeth Padjen:** I agree that an evocative experience can be designed. I'll give an example — one that is also a good example of your vessel analogy: WaterFire in Providence, Rhode Island. WaterFire is both an event and a place. It was conceived by an artist, Barnaby Evans, as a series of nighttime events along the Providence River. It's really about the inside of the vessel, the vessel being the city. Barnaby choreographs the experience, using all the arts — music, visual, performing arts, elements that sometimes come from prehistory — while people dressed in black go down the river in boats and stoke floating braziers with wood — so the fire seems to float on the water. It takes aspects of ritual that we know from a variety of traditions, and it deliberately reaches across cultures and across time to make something that is primeval in many ways. Are we being manipulated by this very clever person in this very meaningful environment? Well, yes. But it is an example of designing not the environment itself, but the character of the environment.

**Steven Cecil:** But the question there is how much of that experience is theater. I think that it's mostly theater. Great theater — it's a wonderful way to spend the evening. Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is great theater, but it's not architecture.

**Henry Moss:** And yet we're talking as designers about ways of creating strong emotions. Our relationship to the world is becoming more disembodied. I don't actually believe that walking around with a Walkman or being on the Internet in itself makes you any less connected to the world. But I believe that many things are somehow combining to make people less connected to the physical, spatial world. When Bruce talked about the vessel, I thought of the central courtyard in the Boston Public Library, which I think is one of the most magical spaces in Boston. Nothing happens
there that anybody could characterize in terms of love, hate, hope, suffering — any obvious emotional reaction. There are some Windsor chairs, a statue, light, water, and a space. It's hard to imagine anyone walking through that place and scowling at it. It must be one of those unconditioned experiences Gary talked about. I don't even know what people feel when they're there, but it's something, and I bet everybody feels something fairly similar. And if I didn't believe that we could manipulate some of the context that creates that kind of experience, there would be no point in being a designer.

**Phyllis Andersen:** As a non-designer talking to designers, I would like to hear more about the making of these places. How do you actually make these things? How do you manipulate material ideas? How can you transfer that knowledge? It would be enormously helpful to know. Of course, it might demystify the process, and then you run the risk demystifying yourself as a designer.

**Bruce Jenneker:** I like what you're saying. I became interested in architecture because I'm a ritualist and the creator of the theater of the religious experience — in my role as precentor, I am responsible for the music, the art, the ceremonial choreography, in short, for the aesthetic element of the church. And it became clear to me that the architectural reality was a threshold to a more powerful experience. I had to make the architects that I got to know quite drunk before they would have a real conversation with me about the architectural event as a threshold. I'd already learned that the way I experience distance and proportionality does something to me. I'm not sure of the psychology or the physics of that, but I know that the way I experience enclosure and dimension affects me. And I also know that things happen to me in the way I experience light. Now, some of that is because I grew up in the sun — I grew up in the Tropic of Capricorn, in South Africa. Living in New England is a very trying experience. But I began to discover that these things really matter. My background in the theater helps, but there is something quite different — and WaterFire may be an example — between a space that encloses a place and serves as a threshold, and a theatrical event or a ritual, important though those are. There's something unique about the way the architectural event serves as threshold. I've been in spaces where the architectural was not a threshold at all — it was an obstacle blocking you from some greater experience, from transcendence.
Places of spirit

Steven Cecil AIA, ASLA:

Chapel of St. Ignatius at Seattle University
by Steven Holl FAIA

State House, Boston
by Charles Bulfinch

Rowes Wharf, Boston
by Adrian Smith FAIA/SOM Chicago

Witch Trial Memorial
Salem, Massachusetts
by James Cutler FAIA and Maggie Smith

Gary Hilderbrand:

The Pantheon
Courances
France

Wellfleet
Massachusetts

LIAN BONDER: That's a very important point. It's almost as though what we do is to make an offering. And that suggests a kind of community with the place itself, a kind of dialogue. I like how that we establish architectural conversations with history, with people, with place, and with some events that may be traumatic. I am collaborating with the artist Krzysztof Wodiczko on a project for a memorial for the abolition of slavery in Nantes, France. Part of our work is to create and reveal layers of meaning. The question is not only what the buildings and spaces can speak, but also how these spaces can become "frames" for people to interact today. Speech is the point — how to foster the presence of the traumatized voices of others.

ELIZABETH PADJEN: Speech brings us into the overlay of some kind of narrative onto a place. Some communication, some knowledge, some story or history. I'm intrigued by the notion that has emerged. On the one hand, there are places that require an overlay of narrative. And on the other hand, it may be possible to create places that in themselves have an inherent quality of the ineffable. I like to go back to Phyllis' question, which I think very valid: What are the tools that we use to create these kinds of spaces? We talked about light. Manipulation of scale is another one.

BRICE JENNEKER: Discontinuity is another. Somehow it's really important. By that I mean to say that from our everyday life, an experience takes people away from their daily life and confronts them with something new. Other is low light levels that have to do with a sense of mystery. I put an organ case into a church in Tham in the north of England. We spent hours lowering the light levels just enough so that people couldn't quite tell, even in daylight, where the organ case ended and the ceiling began. And it really made all the difference. I think hearing voices from unseen locations, having light come in from places that you don't understand, are important tools that you can use. Atmospheric changes can be quite profound in landscapes. And those are all scaleless.

BRUCE JENNEKER: I think that we are called not only to know the tools and to understand their possibilities, but also to be in some sort of relationship with the tools. I'm thinking of a floral artist, whom I love watching work. She takes forever to do a flower arrangement. Not because it takes her a long time to put the flowers in. But she'll look at the bucket of floral material, and it will take her a long time to choose one. And then she will stand with it. She looks at the vase, and she looks at the space. For a long time. I'm a flower arranger, too, but I move my flowers around 20 times. She'll take that one flower and she'll put it in one place, and it will stay there. And then she'll choose the next one. There's a sense that she knows what the message of each of these elements is, and she knows what the message of that space is. And when it's done, which takes six hours, sometimes it's bouncy and huge, and sometimes it's three flowers and a leaf. But it's perfect for the space. She is totally engaged with the moment, the place, the materials, and the techniques of snipping and wiring or whatever. I think the real challenge of our time is not to deliver the product but to be the student, to let the tools and the materials teach us what their possibilities might be, rather than our exploiting their potential.

STEVEN CECIL: That sounds similar to the traditions of ikebana, Japanese flower arranging. It's highly formalized, but each arrangement is designed for a particular place. You cannot pick up an ikebana arrangement and put it on the other side of the room. And that suggests another tool we have at our disposal: point of view. If you look at the Vietnam
Memorial from the air, it doesn't mean very much. It requires a specific point of view, and it requires movement. Movement is itself a key to many of the spaces we're talking about. If you were beamed into the middle of Chartres Cathedral, you'd be impressed. But you need the procession through the space to discover the evocative experience that is otherwise hidden.

**Elizabeth Paden:** When Henry first mentioned discontinuity, I thought of it in a spatial sense, the discontinuity of going from narrow space to large space, for example. And that also suggests procession. Let me put two examples on the table — places that have some of the characteristics we've been talking about. In some respects they're more alike than you might imagine. The Hancock tower in Boston and the Mall in Washington, DC. Would you call them evocative places?

**Steven Cecil:** I'm fascinated by what L'Enfant did when he laid out Washington. He was very conscious of the topography, very conscious of the orientation and the relationship to the river and to Arlington. He had a complete grasp of the way visual connections are made. Put the Mall someplace else and it wouldn't work. It's all about place and space. Whereas the geometry that generated the Hancock tower — wonderful building that it is — seems to me very trivial in the scale of things.

**Elizabeth Paden:** I'm picking on these two places for a few reasons. One is that they're examples of some of the tools we talked about: size, scale, light. The Mall is on the one hand one of the most designed sites in this country, for the reasons Steve just mentioned, but at the same time one of the most underdesigned spaces. The Hancock tower is not a space, but a highly crafted object that seems to elicit a visceral response from all kinds of people who find it beautiful.

**Gary Hilderbrand:** My reaction is the opposite of Steve's. I find the Hancock tower to be a beautifully honed object that is invested in a set of forces that were conjured in the shaping of that building. I don't think of it as having qualities of spirit as we've been using the term, but it fascinates me as an item of cultural production. As for the Mall, I agree that the plan emerged from a profound set of observations about the characteristics of the site and an understanding of how we see and perceive space. It is a remarkable invention, in terms of how it presents ideas about the way a society and its institutions could be built. It is clearly an Enlightenment idea. What we see today, though, is in fact more the result of work by the MacMillan Commission around 1900. When I go to the Washington Mall, I'm conditioned by my anecdotal knowledge of all the elements that have formed it, and then I'm really disappointed in the way that it looks today. Its great vision hasn't been well tended. It seems too big, too windy, too trampled. There are too many cars. My intellectual sensibility about it gets frustrated by the realities of the problems that are visited upon it every day by the fact that it's mainly a tourist destination.

**Phyllis Andersen:** Unfortunately, the sublime can slip into the banal very easily. That is an issue: how do you sustain the sublime? I agree with you; I have the same reaction to the Mall. It's banal. It's also home to an increasing number of memorials, which pose a very difficult question. We now seem to have a set of rituals for memorializing. Because of the number of people involved in creating memorials, each new space has its own, rather large community of people who in various ways share an experience and maybe unconsciously veer into these memorializing rituals. How can a designer transcend the banal in these cases and at least reach for the sublime?
Places of spirit

Henry Moss AIA:

Cold Harbor Civil War Battlefield
Virginia

Boston Public Library Courtyard
Boston

Grand Central Station Terminal Hall
New York City

Emily Dickinson's house
Amherst, Massachusetts

LIAN BONDER: The question of the lime is problematic because it deals with
questions of beauty, when many of these memorials
often about fear and horror. I don't think we
should or should deal with them in terms of aesthetics.
Instead, filter them in the light of ethics,
through the lens of the uncanny, and through
visions of "ugliness." Ugliness not the opposite of
beauty. And that is one of the interesting aspects
of the Hancock tower — it can be read in the light
of ugliness, as an object out of place. Aside from
many architectural qualities, that is what makes it
verbal. It suggests a new dimension to the city, to
Boston itself at some point accepted that there
would be something different. The Mall seems to
body the notion of available land, and that is its
biggest problem: if this is available land, then let's
stop plopping memorials on it. And of course every
constituency calls for one.

EVEN CECIL: The thing that fascinates
me about Washington is the fit between the
graphy that it had and the geography that was
created — it's much more interesting than simply
lining objects on a site. I think the Mall today is
a scratchy record of a great piece of music. You're
responding to that piece of music. You hate that
so darned scratchy.

ELIZABETH PADJEN: And I love the fact
that it's so scratchy. When I go to Washington, I
go to the Mall. We talked about rituals; this becomes
ritual. I walk out and stand in the middle. I look to
left, I look to the right. I get a sense of it, I
orb it. And then I look at all the stuff that people
doing. They're wearing their T-shirts and eating
hotdogs and chasing their kids who are chasing
dogs who are chasing the Frisbees. No, the grass
tended, and it's unprogrammed. But I love the
spirit of the place. It seems to me that it's America's
front yard, but we're all comfortable there. All this
activity happens in what is by all other measures a
very sacred space, in terms of its history, its design,
and its intended symbolism. I love the fact that
anyone who comes to that place can claim it. It's not
quite the same as, say, Copley Square, which is also
very active, filled with people eating, napping, even
skateboarding. Perhaps it's the presence of Trinity
Church that makes the difference. It's Trinity's front
yard. And of course, Trinity is a destination in itself
for thousands of tourists.

BRUCE JENNEKER: Something like three
quarters of a million people.

ELIZABETH PADJEN: That's an
extraordinary number. More than the population of
Boston. What do you think is drawing them?

BRUCE JENNEKER: A lot of people come
because they know about it — they know something
about H.H. Richardson and the architecture or
they know about the engineering. But a lot of people
come because it's so unusual in America for a great
church to command a great city square. St. Patrick's
doesn't have that. St. John the Divine doesn't have it.
Grace Cathedral doesn't really have it. There's hardly
another church in this country that has a piazza in
front of it like the one at Notre Dame or even at
St. Paul's in London. The building asserts itself on
the square, and it's a powerful statement. There's an
apocryphal story about Richardson and Phillips
Brooks, the rector at that time, walking down the
diagonal of Huntington Avenue; the site was still
clear and the design was up for grabs. Richardson
reportedly said to Phillips Brooks, "What do you
want people to say when they come here for the first
time?" And Phillips Brooks, with his love of
modernity, reportedly answered, "I don't want them
to say a thing. I want them to sing, 'A mighty
fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing...'" And
in a way that really does happen. You walk across the
square, and there is this mighty fortress. But then it serves as a threshold into a totally different space. And a totally different experience. Whereas the outside of the building is massive and masculine, the inside of the building is feminine and open and womblike. And I think that’s another piece that draws people there.

**Gary Hilderbrand:** I’ve wondered if people are drawn to the non-liturgical, non-ecclesiastical aspects of the building as much as to the fact that it’s a church. It seems as much a theater, almost an opera house, in the way that so much is focused on the crossing, far forward of where the liturgy takes place. And to sit there in the congregation always seemed to me to be like getting a box in the theater. It suggests the beginning of a movement away from strictly ecclesiastical form to one that’s more about ceremony and public engagement, that is perhaps more secular in character.

**Bruce Jenneker:** You’re absolutely right. Phillips Brooks was trying to find a secular vocabulary for transcendence, and his partners in that effort were Richardson and La Farge, who did the murals and many of the stained-glass windows. They were trying to find a secular vocabulary for Christianity in the context of modernity. Your comment about the theater box is also true for the congregation and for the preacher, too. It is the coziest pulpit in Christendom. If you stand in the pulpit, you feel as though you can touch every single person in that room. No one is beyond your arm’s reach. It is the most uncanny thing. I’ve preached in some of the grandest pulpits in the Anglican Communion, and I haven’t had that feeling. I think it’s one reason why Phillips Brooks had such a huge following here, because people tend to relate to the preacher and Trinity has this intimacy. Which is another piece of that secular vocabulary. Phillips Brooks asked La Farge to put two murals in the church that would tell the meaning of the church and its vocation as you come in. They illustrate two Bible stories, which represented for Phillips Brooks the major concerns and challenges of Christianity in his time: the questions “Do I belong here? Is there place for me?” and “Can there be meaning in life?” And so on one side is the story of the woman at the well — the woman who had had many husbands and was rejected by her community because she tried to find happiness and joy and intimacy. And across from it is the story of the lawyer, who came to Jesus at night and said, “What must I do to be saved?” I think those two images shape the experience of the people in the room even when they don’t know how to interpret them; they communicate something.

**Gary Hilderbrand:** Let’s go back to the question of why visitors come to Trinity in such great numbers. Let’s assume they come without a connection to the stories you just described and without a connection to the historical significance of this particular church, which represents an important moment in modernity. Do you think the visitors can read all that?

**Bruce Jenneker:** It’s hard for me to answer. My perception is that the visitors come because of this articulation of significance at the end of Copley Square. I think that’s the threshold. Once they go through it, they find all kinds of things. But I think they come first because when they look at the building, they know that the space that is enclosed by those walls matters.

**Julian Bonder:** But that may be the case of many of the cathedrals or churches we normally visit when we go to Europe. What strikes me as very interesting, being from another faith, is the question you raised, “Do I belong here?” It comes back to the idea of intimacy, of speech, of dialogue, of meeting...
e-to-face. It comes back to Steve's point about whether our work is about others or about ourselves. It comes back to the question of the tools that are available to us to create certain conditions. It comes back to our discussion of the Mall, because the Mall is a place that says all of us belong there. And it all ultimately brings us to the question, how can designers make spaces that tell us all that we could belong there?

**Lizbeth Paden:** I can offer an example of a building that was intended to do just that. Go to the other side of Copley Square, to McKim's Boston Public Library. It was built as a place for the people.” Like Trinity, it conveys a message, an idea, although a wholly secular one. Although the architecture is quite different, the designer used similar tools — the layering of media, art, texts, procession. It has its own kind of ritual liturgy in some respects.

**Hyllis Andersen:** I think there are only library spaces that convey the kind of spirit I’ve been talking about: Bates Hall at the BPL, the reading room of Congress reading room, the reading room of the New York Public Library. Not all the reading rooms I’ve been in have it; some are just pompous. Others offer a marvelous, democratic experience, there is a sense of awe, but often also a sense of hierarchy. And there is always the understood ritual of how you behave. It’s the respectful consideration of other people.

**Lizbeth Paden:** They also remind of things — ideas, events, history, people, the accumulation of knowledge — that are beyond that are greater than we are.

**Enry Moss:** But there’s still something missing at the Boston Public Library, and that is the essibility of what one experiences at Trinity, particularly as you go from the outside to the inside.

By comparison, the McKim building is full of predictable spaces, and the behaviors are predictable, and it’s easy to imagine when you go in there what that hierarchy is going to be. I love Richardson’s scale jumps, which are these extraordinary leaps from one scale to another. The thing that amazes me about Trinity is that once you’ve seen this great fortress, this mountain of a building, you go in and it’s domestic. The discontinuity is supportive, both for an individual and then for this extraordinary community. I think that’s what Kahn did at his best. He made these communal spaces, even where nobody expected them or wanted them, like the Exeter Library. The students are just going in to get a book to do their homework. And yet here’s this grand image of the community somehow in the middle of that.

**Julian Bonder:** And yet both Richardson and McKim lived in a world of greater certainty than ours. We see an uncertain world laid here before us — politically, economically, you name it. What then is the contribution of designers in such a world? What can we offer? And for me, the answer has to do with the ethical weight of choice. Uncertainty should not lead us to think that we should represent uncertainty or chaos through buildings and landscapes. Uncertainty should lead us to a certain choice, and choice is not “whatever.”

**Steven Cecil:** We spend years learning how to form things, but I think the better word is “transform.” To transform is really something different. And I think it begins with an attitude on the part of the designer, an understanding of the difference between providing and offering. And the result is not about making a statement. It’s about creating a place where a statement can occur.
LE TEFCO CUSTOMIZE SOLUTIONS FOR A HISTORIC APPEARANCE WITH MODERN EFFICIENCY.

At EFCO, we understand the unique challenges of historic replication. In fact, we have a long history of working with codes and committees to assure success from initial review to final installation.

EFCO is a leading manufacturer with a vast range of products as well as the ability to completely customize your solutions. We can reproduce fenestration that maintains historic integrity while providing updated thermal efficiency and smooth operation.

To minimize tear-out labor and debris, choose an EFCO Trim-All™ Window Replacement System to fit over existing wood or steel window frames. Any EFCO product can be specified with unlimited custom paint colors—and a selection of finishes and claddings—to match existing architecture and keep your project beautiful for years to come.

Bring a new perspective to your historical project. Contact your EFCO representative, FENESTRA Inc., at 207-761-4455 or e-mail fenestra@maine.rr.com. You can also call EFCO direct at 1-800-221-4169 or visit us on the Web at www.efcocorp.com.
Forget rolling the dice.
Dakota DesignStaff delivers winning A/E Staffing Solutions every time.

Our staff are screened by a registered, practicing architect who personally interviews each candidate including portfolio review, hands-on CAD testing and reference checks. All staff are fully insured for liability and workers comp, and we cover all payroll taxes and benefits.

To learn more, visit our web site at www.dakotadesignstaff.com or call 978-371-0530.

Setting the Standard

Providing Superior Solutions™ to the Architectural Community

Accounting, Auditing & Taxation
Internal Control Reviews
Ownership Transition Strategies
Business Valuations
Mergers & Acquisitions
Overhead Rate Audits, Defense & Representation
Project Management Consulting
Personal Financial Planning

CAMBRIDGE
NEW BEDFORD
WWW.TOFIAS.COM
888.761.8835
Ode to a Vent: In Praise of Honesty
by Otile McManus
 Rising from the Commonwealth Flats in South Boston, six chamfered chimney stacks, 18 stories high, soar skyward. Bands of orange and buff brick up massive metal panels that intersect expanses of exposed concrete. The building face is intersected only by rectilinear glass-block portals and, two sides, by a series of immense teal-green clerestories.

More than the Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge or the new tunnels or the seven-and-a-half mile web of new highway coursing under Boston, a new structure — Vent Building 5 — brings the Big Dig to life. For me, the building is a visible manifestation of all the logarithms and computer drawings, of all the planning and designing, of all the digging and filling, of all the money and labor and time and politics that created the $15 billion engineering marvel that is the Central Artery Tunnel Project.

Vent Building 5 is huge; it is new; it is bold; it is vast; it is unadorned. It animates the very palpable reality of the almost inconceivable changes to Boston's infrastructure that have occurred as the city has gone about its business for the past 15 years. The building shows just what it takes to put thousands of cars underground daily, drawing fresh air in, spewing bad air out, lungs for the new highway below.

Boston, where so much new architecture is arriving, each of the seven new vent buildings has certain integrity that challenges conventional aedicum, but Vent Building 5 has something more. Because it is so new? So overscaled? So prominently located? So concrete? Is it because traditional Bostonians have been traditionally allergic to change in certain spheres? We not only have our hats, but we also have our red brick and gold leaf.

What's puzzling here is that Bostonians do pay homage to infrastructure once it's been incorporated into the collective civic imagination. The architecture that we now treasure in the Back Bay went up slowly, building by building, block by block, as the fetid swampland was filled. The vigor and grace of the Northern Avenue Bridge has recently been reaffirmed, almost 100 years after its construction. It will be retained as a bona fide bridge, but only after demolition was threatened for years. We have managed to accept harder-to-love public projects when they are viewed at a comfortable distance across space or time, like the Deer Island treatment-plant digesters across Boston Harbor, or the 19th-century Chestnut Hill Waterworks, the landmark industrial complex that originally contained huge, coal-powered steam engines and that will make fine high-end condos in the near future. Must we sanitize and romanticize public works functions in order to embrace and accept them?

Many Bostonians don't see it this way, though enthusiastic crowds — literally hundreds of thousands — lined up to walk across the Zakim Bridge and through the Liberty Tunnel last year. Vent Building 5 has been subject to abuse and criticism. Editorial writers, columnists, and newspaper reporters have sneered and piled on the negatives. Artists, environmentalists, and local residents have complained that the new structure looks like a nuclear power plant and is the laughing stock of South Boston. Politicians, including City Councilor James Kelley, have been disparaging; and Governor Mitt Romney is said to have called it "the ugliest building in Boston" during the 2002 election campaign.

Vent Building 5 stands out because it stands alone. It looms large, a tyrannosaurus rex to the convention center's brontosaurus, in the words of an architect involved in developing the design standards for the Big Dig. Under construction since 1992, it is still a new kid on the block — or at least what passes for a block in this section of the city that is still very much a work in progress.

Does this explain why the resistance to Vent Building 5 has been so great? Because the building is so new? So overscaled? So prominently located? So concrete? Is it because traditional Bostonians have been traditionally allergic to change in certain spheres? We not only have our hats, but we also have our red brick and gold leaf.

What's puzzling here is that Bostonians do pay homage to infrastructure once it's been incorporated into the collective civic imagination. The architecture that we now treasure in the Back Bay went up slowly, building by building, block by block, as the fetid swampland was filled. The vigor and grace of the Northern Avenue Bridge has recently been reaffirmed, almost 100 years after its construction. It will be retained as a bona fide bridge, but only after demolition was threatened for years. We have managed to accept harder-to-love public projects when they are viewed at a comfortable distance across space or time, like the Deer Island treatment-plant digesters across Boston Harbor, or the 19th-century Chestnut Hill Waterworks, the landmark industrial complex that originally contained huge, coal-powered steam engines and that will make fine high-end condos in the near future. Must we sanitize and romanticize public works functions in order to embrace and accept them?

To the naysayers and the doubters, I say take another look! Drive or walk on Summer Street from South Boston into Boston. Confront Vent Building 5 in all its muscular power. This is one honest building, doing an honest day's work, its
Veil

form revealing its function, showing Boston just how the Big Dig works, a thrilling architectural antidote to years of Palladian pollution, postmodern pretensions, and contemporary contextualism.

Observe how its angularity provides a perfect foil for the curvilinear roof of Rafael Vinoly's new convention center. See how these two modern buildings frame a new dialogue with the downtown. Compare its soaring profile with the high-rises of different times: the United Shoe Machinery Building, the Federal Reserve Bank, the Custom House tower. Consider that its newest neighbor is the 14-story Manulife headquarters, the city's first radically "green" glass office building and a technological marvel.

Vent Building 5 may not have the comfortable familiarity of the Victorian Chestnut Hill Waterworks complex, but it has a clear, engaging language of its own. Like all the vent buildings, it was located on a specific site because it has a specific job to do. Like all the vent buildings, it is big because it contains a series of huge fans, some 30 feet in diameter, several miles of duct work, and all the mechanical equipment needed to circulate huge volumes of air. Like all the vent buildings, its chimneys rise high because the exhaust must be dispersed at calibrated heights in the atmosphere. Like all the vent buildings, it is clad in metal panels and exposed concrete because they are durable materials that require little maintenance.

It is not as if Vent Building 5 is without a few deft gestures of its own. There is for example, the matter of color: the teal-green louvers, and the orange-and-buff striped brick facing. But the colors serve their own purpose and acknowledge the colors and materials of the surrounding wharf buildings. There is something very seaworthy in its machined, white-metal panels. Yet Vent Building 5 is neither defined by, nor deferential to, expectations that it be anything other than what it is.

Although Big Dig officials have tried to assuage criticisms of Vent Building 5, pointing out that landscaping will soften its edges and that other buildings will grow up around it and diminish its visual impact, I hope it continues to serve as irritant and inspiration to those who will plan, develop, and design new offices, hotels and condominiums on nearby streets and thoroughfares. Let's live up to Vent Building 5's challenges and create something crisp, real, original, and daring for this part of the new Boston.

Perhaps we should start with a public tour?

Otilé McManus writes occasionally for ArchitectureBoston.

Editor's note:
The architects for Vent Building 5 were Wallace Floyd Design Group and CWA/MJA Joint Venture.

There are seven new vent buildings in all, plus a new air-intake building near South Station, but they haven't generated the same negative attention as Building 5. Each stands in a more established location. Vent Building 1 more than holds its own next to the US Post Office on Fort Point Channel. (Vent Building 2 was eliminated during the planning process.) Both Vent Building 3 on Atlantic Avenue and Vent Building 4 near the Blackstone Block in Haymarket will be wrapped in brand-new offices, condominiums, and hotel rooms. Vent Building 6 looks as if it is right at home in Marine Industrial Park, as does as the award-winning Vent Building 7 (above), surrounded by cargo warehouses at Logan Airport. Similarly, Vent Building 8 was slipped between the snaking overhead highway and railroad tracks at North Station.
Our Richardson Collection includes sofas, chairs, loveseat and ottoman, with the option of down cushions. Choose from our wide variety of handsome designer fabrics.

Charles Webb designs and builds solidly-crafted, elegant furniture with classic lines and timeless appeal. We create these hardwood and upholstered pieces right in our Somerville, MA workshop. Visit or call for a free color catalog.

Harvard Square:
6 Story Street
Cambridge MA 617 547-2100
Hours: Mon-Sat 10-6, Sun 1-5

Charles Webb designs and builds solidly-crafted, elegant furniture with classic lines and timeless appeal. We create these hardwood and upholstered pieces right in our Somerville, MA workshop. Visit or call for a free color catalog.

Our showroom was created for residential and commercial design professionals. Choose from an extensive collection of classic and unique natural stones, many displayed in fields. Select from a wide variety of distinctive decorative surfaces, including porcelain and agglomerate tiles, mosaics, glass and metal tiles, plus recycled ceramics and counters.

Stone Source Boston Area Showroom

Stone Source
Boston 691A Somerville Avenue, Somerville (617) 666-7900
Chicago 414 North Orleans (312) 335-9900
New York 215 Park Avenue South (212) 979-6400
Philadelphia (215) 482-3000
Washington, DC 1400 15th Street, NW (202) 285-5900

To see a complete online catalog, visit us at stonesource.com
The natural choice for distinctive facades.

Arriscraft Stone's Natural Edge Technology features silica sand and limestone instead of concrete for an organic, natural look. Specify Arriscraft Stone and enjoy these unique benefits:

- Lifetime warranty
- Natural Edge Technology
- Uniform high strength, high density, and low absorption
- Exceptionally tight dimensional tolerances
- Same detailing and installation as brick
- Severe weathering standard
- No sealing required
- Twenty standard colors in three textures
- Fast turnaround – typical lead times only 8-10 weeks

For details on how Arriscraft Stone can help you meet both your design and budget objectives, call Consolidated Brick at 1-800-321-0021.
If you can dream it, Millwork Unlimited™ can create it!

Let your imagination run wild and your creative juices take over with Millwork Unlimited™. Simple drawings, sketches, and visions can be beautifully translated into reality. For interior or exterior applications, Millwork Unlimited™ will create the unique trim products that you have only dreamed about, as well as the tried and true profiles you have come to rely on.

Millwork Unlimited™ meticulously crafts their millwork and moulding profiles using AZEK® trim products. AZEK® the leading brand of cellular PVC, provides the unequalled combination of Uniformity, Durability, Workability and Beauty.

Custom Millwork Created with AZEK®

For more information contact your Millwork Unlimited™ Specialist:
1-800-243-2283

Visit us at Build Boston booth #728
Before architecture, before civilization, before even agriculture, humans recognized that there was spirit in nature all around them. The most succinct and encompassing definition of spirit is “animating force.” It is not instinct, or emotion, or feeling, necessarily, although there is spirit in each of these. Spirit is a force that moves through us yet is somehow not of us, with a life and a will of its own. Because it is independent of human will, and because it is indispensable to the human enterprise, spirit has been a major preoccupation of all human civilizations.

Australian Aborigines lived without permanent structures, either physical or social, yet had a deep mythic connection to their environment by means of their belief system, called “the Dreamtime.” These hunter/gatherers saw their deities and the creation myths of their cosmos in the natural features of their world. A hill or a river embodied both an event of crucial mythical importance and the enduring spiritual power of that event. As with animist religions elsewhere, the Aborigines lived in a reverential state of “participation mystique” with their world as a result of this belief system. The relationship to spirit was immediate and direct. This connection was maintained by means of rituals, including rock paintings and other symbolic activities. Aborigines saw these acts as restorative, renewing connection to the creative spiritual forces inherent in nature.

Stone Age cultures have left behind geometric enigmas in the form of stone circles, henges, menhirs and tumuli. Tremendous energy was expended upon these earthworks and monuments, with little apparent utilitarian benefit. What motivated generations of pre-literate humanity in engineering feats that rivaled the pyramids or Gothic cathedrals? Whether Stonehenge is a giant calendar or, as a more recent theory
ggests, the private parts of the Earth Mother herself, the
lost cogent answer is replenishment and renewal. An
agricultural society relies upon the fertility of the land and
seeks all means available to control and increase it. Spirit is
a primordial fertilizer, and the monuments of the Stone
Age, perhaps the very first constructions worthy to be
billed architecture, were intended to invoke, contain, and
marshal this potent force.

The ambiguity of Stonehenge and similar monuments (is the
energy invoked celestial or terrestrial?) suggests a transitional
pace in our relationship to spirit. These sites invoke the
creative energy of the earth as the goddess of life, but
suggest that the source of fertilization — of renewal and
birth — is solar, in the form of the rising sun on the winter
stice. Greek architecture of the Iron Age may also have
been transitional in this regard. While our post-classical
consciousness projects celestial implications onto a temple on
hill, Vincent Scully insists that "all Greek sacred archi-
tecture explores and praises the character of a god or a group
of gods in a specific place" and that "the land (to the
reeks) was not a picture but a true force which physically
abodied the powers that ruled the world...."

As a fact, the development of architecture parallels the
solution of civilization with its hierarchical social structure
and differentiating consciousness, precisely as a conduit
maintaining access to that vital source of life, the spirit.

Eugenfried Giedion has observed that "both ziggurat and
pyramids derive their existence from man's awakened urge
ward the vertical as a symbol of contact with the deity,
contact with the sky." The awakening of this urge coincided
with the development of the first cities and a corresponding
hierarchical social structure. In other words, as human society
developed from an agricultural to an urban orientation, our
use of the source of spiritual energy simultaneously shifted
from the earth to the heavens. While the landscapes of the
neolithic time, Stone Age Europe, and Iron Age Greece were
ive with the life force, a student of later landscapes and
tthemes might imagine that spiritual energy was drained
om nature as we became less intimately involved with the
rhth. Stonehenge and Greek architecture sought to relate to
and focus the energy inherent in their immediate environs;
ggurats, pyramids, and ultimately cathedrals sought spirit
in the heavens.

It is not well known that the Temple of Jerusalem, like
Stonehenge, was oriented towards the rising sun on a specific
day. The religious scholar Julian Morgenstern has described
how the eastern gates were opened on New Year's day of the
olar calendar to allow the first rays of the rising sun to enter
ep into the temple. These doors remained closed for the
rest of the year. The temple was, according to contemporary
counts, a condensed image of the cosmos, self-contained
and ritually maintained. Connection with external sources of
energy were reduced to this one significant occasion, when
the divine spirit embodied in the sun's rays penetrated and
renewed the sacred space.

Where do we find spirit in an age of secularism? Church
doors still face east, and steeples point toward the heavens,
but our connection with spirit is often tenuous at best.
Despite our science and our humanism, we know that spirit
is a powerful force. Fundamentalism, substance abuse, mental
illness, not to mention the worship of material wealth and a
culture of narcissism, can all be seen as aspects of spiritual
dis-ease. Because civilization has apparently lost its ability to
channel and contain spirit, individuals are left to contend
with taming this powerful force on their own. But the spirit
by definition is not a force that can be tamed. At best it can
be invoked, channeled, directed, and expressed. When we
lack the ability to connect to spirit in a creative fashion, its
manifestation becomes negative and destructive. Senseless
violence may well be the ultimate expression of frustrated
spiritual energy gone awry without proper cultivation.

Our architecture has changed to reflect the values of
civilization, yet its fundamental role as container for and
expression of the life force remains. As our world views and
consciousness continue to evolve, we will find new ways to
employ architecture in the creative containment of spirit. The
awakening awareness of earth energy, as demonstrated by
Western fascination with the Eastern art of feng-shui, is a case
in point. Earth energy, in the form of electromagnetic
currents, is a measurable phenomenon, used by birds and
other species to inform migratory movement. Investigators in
Britain trace the location of churches, wells, and ancient
tracks known as ley lines to the presence of electromagnetic
currents in the earth which can be verified by means of the
ancient art of dowsing. Perhaps the claims of feng-shui can be
scientifically established, and architecture will once again
be the principle conduit for channeling what the Chinese call
chi. Although there is no English word that fully expresses
the meaning of chi, "spirit" may be our closest equivalent.

Architecture, as a specific and highly specialized form of
building, owes its origins and its continuing significance to
its ability to express the power and awe of the spirit. The
invocation, propitiation, and containment of spiritual energy
through ritual and religion lies at the heart of the human
enterprise. Even in today's secular age, architecture has not
lost this original function. It is only architects who have
sometimes forgotten the elemental power of building.

A. Vernon Woodworth AIA, an architect and consultant with the Sullivan Code
Group, holds a Master of Theological Studies Degree from the Harvard Divinity
School and is a graduate of the C. G. Jung Institute in Boston.
A group of lions is a PRIDE.

A group of ducks is a PADDLING.

A group of raccoons is a GAZE.

A group of zebras is a CROSSING.

A group of shingles is the CEDAR VALLEY PANEL SYSTEM.

The CEDAR VALLEY SHINGLE PANEL SYSTEM offers incredible architectural design flexibility. As a complete, integrated system, it includes one- to five-course panels with even, staggered, or open-keyway patterns, pre-woven corners, and factory-finished colors. Stronger and more durable than individually applied shingles, the system also enhances your design with the highest quality Western Red Cedar shingles available.

1.866.202.9809  WWW.CEDAR-VALLEY.COM/DESIGN3

VISIT US AT BUILD BOSTON, BOOTH #419
Spirit Houses

St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1813
Newton Lower Falls
Newton, Massachusetts

First Congregational Church
Summer Sanctuary, 1834
Nantucket, Massachusetts

Stannard-Greensboro Bend
Methodist Church, 1888
Stannard, Vermont
In some parts of the world, people build or buy little house-like structures — the size of birdcages or dollhouses — that they place in auspicious locations to appease and please the spirits that can protect them. The construction of these “spirit houses” is an ancient practice rooted in animism, which continues despite the adoption of other religions.

Early New Englanders would have had no patience with such ideas. Instead, they built homely meetinghouses dedicated to the worship of a single, sometimes wrathful, God. Few of these structures remain today; in response to changing liturgies, evolving architectural tastes, and even competition from the growth of Anglicanism, the old Congregational meetinghouses were replaced by what is now perhaps the most enduring symbol of New England: the white wooden church. Constructed in the 18th and 19th centuries, these structures accommodated enormous variety in styles — Federalist, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Victorian — all expressed with simple architectural forms of great power. Perhaps unwittingly, New Englanders were also building spirit houses — places to shelter and nurture the spirit of their congregations, their communities, and their region.

It was this power that attracted the attention of renowned architectural photographer Steve Rosenthal. Throughout a career spent photographing some of the most significant contemporary architecture in New England, Rosenthal has taken time out to discover and document these regional icons. It is a sometimes discouraging quest: already some of his subjects have been debased by vinyl siding, insensitive additions, and development of surrounding sites. Indeed, a sense of loss hangs heavily over some of these images, while others reveal a vitality that will surely endure for centuries to come. Look closely at these images and you will discover that they capture more than the spirit of the places they document. They also capture the spirit of the gifted photographer who made them.

— Elizabeth Padjen FAIA
Spirit Houses

South Effingham
New Hampshire Church, 1891
South Effingham, New Hampshire

Rocky Hill Meetinghouse, 1785
Amesbury, Massachusetts
(a property of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities)
Editor's note: An exhibition of these images will be on view at the Panopticon Gallery in Waltham, Massachusetts from March 4-April 17, 2004.
Underground Solutions Work
for Boston and Beyond

We help owners manage subsurface issues to create advantages — adding space below grade, speeding construction, mitigating site contamination, updating infrastructure, and reducing project costs. Our roots are in Boston, our locations are expanding. Call us at 617.886.7400 for a consultation before you start your next project.

www.HaleyAldrich.com

17,000 pairs of eyes
could all be focused
on your ad.
Right here. Right now.

It's not too late to place an ad in the next issue of ArchitectureBoston.

For information, call 1 800 996 3863 or send an email to rvendola@architects.org

www.architectureboston.com
Your competitive advantage!

The home is increasingly a focus of self expression and individual comfort, which means your clients deserve something extraordinary in home organization. Superior engineering and quality materials are the standard at California Closets. From simple and functional to beautiful and luxurious, our space planning experts create custom storage for your clients into any planned interior design scheme.

Call today for more information about working with California Closets.

See us at Build Boston: Booth #209, 211

800.225.6901 • calclosets.com

Visit our showroom:
873 Worcester Rd. (Rt. 9 West) Wellesley, MA

CALIFORNIA CLOSETS®
Here's a scene in the movie It's a Wonderful Life which the Jimmy Stewart character staggers, wildered, down a street which both is and isn't the main street of his hometown. Physically, the buildings are the same ones he's always known, dull, safe, innocent banks and drugstores we've seen earlier in the movie. But this nightmarish, alternative-reality main street, with its tawdry shing "Saloon" and "Girls–Girls–Girls" signs, is vision of what his town might have been like if things had gone differently. What makes the scene terrifying is the sense of profound disorientation: here's the place you know best, it's right here; it's absent, its soul is missing.

I have something of this uneasy, unreal feeling when I go back to the town where I grew up. It's an old mill town: Putnam, Connecticut. Nobody's ever heard of it. It isn't near Boston or Hartford or Providence; it isn't near anything; other, smaller towns are near it.

Then I was a kid, Putnam was already struggling. The mills and factories lining its modest river were mostly closed. The town center — so small that stead of going "downtown" everyone spoke of "downstreet" — was made up of tired old brick buildings and cracked concrete sidewalks. But was a real town; you needed to go there to buy sic stuff. Our house was four miles away on the edge of the surrounding farm country, but pretty uch every day we got in the car and went downstreet.

That Putnam, the one I remember from the 1970s, imprinted on my memory as if it were the true, permanent Putnam. Bugbee's department store, ith its creaky wooden floors — no matter which tion of the store you were shopping in, old rs. Bugbee was always there watching you, with her white filigreed hairdo and her black-framed glasses on a chain around her neck. Next door, a dark store that dealt in paint, wallpaper, and funerals. Two fruit-and-vegetable stores: the one where we always shopped, and the one where we never did. The Johnny Unitas Quarterback Club, a hamburger place shaped like an enormous football. The old Belding thread mill: on hot summer nights, the three giant windows stacked above the center entrance were wide open, crammed with the spider-like silhouettes of workers on a break, their arms and legs spread wide to catch whatever breeze might be blowing through.

Of course I would have expected it to change in the 25 years since my family moved away: nobody's hometown stays the same forever. You go back as a grownup and are shocked to see that the dry cleaner has become a taco place, and one of the banks is now a martial-arts school.

But with Putnam, the change is more fundamental. Physically it is perfectly preserved. But its function is radically different. It has been transformed into a tourist attraction: a giant antiques mall.

All along the two main cross streets, the stores that used to sell clothes and shoes and wallpaper and wheelbarrows now sell nothing but antiques. The department store is an antiques shop. So is the paint store. So is the furniture store. So are the shoe store, the fabric store, the hardware store, and the jewelry store.

Pevner's drugstore, where I worked during school vacations, still has its old "Restaurant–Drugs" sign above the entrance. But inside, the aisles where I used to help customers find Ace bandages and Preparation--H are lined with glass cases full of $50 baseball cards and 30-year-old Pez dispensers.
It's doubly disorienting because I sold those same Pez dispensers from this same spot years ago on the nights when I worked the drugstore's front register. They were throwaway items back then; now they've resurrected themselves as objects worthy of reverence: collectibles. The mixing bowls, ashtrays, board games, and lunchboxes I grew up with are now offered as antiques. There's a weird feeling that I might discover something that actually did come out of my parents' basement — some artifact, long forgotten but instantly familiar, that will restore my lost childhood to me.

The story of Putnam is one that has been told over and over again in New England: the old mill town that has lost its reason to exist and finds a new way to survive. From a planning standpoint, Putnam's transformation is successful. No one has really been displaced, since chain stores on the outskirts were draining business from the center long before the antiques stores came along. The pedestrian character has been preserved; the vacancy rate is low; and the area is generating jobs and taxes. Preservationists, too, would find much to admire. The old buildings are in active use; and the streetscape — bald and implacable as it is — remains unaltered.

So why am I so fiercely possessive of the Putnam I remember? I have a fastidious, self-righteous disapproval of all these upstart businesses run by people from somewhere else to cater to people from somewhere else. But I'm an outsider, too. My family moved to Putnam when I was 11, because my father was going to be president of one of the factories and we were going to be rich. We moved away ten years later because he was forced out of his job and there weren't any other local companies looking for presidents. Ten years after that, when his latest business venture foundered and the bank called the loan, my father shot himself.

How can I possibly be objective? For me, this scrappy, tough, peeling town is a lost paradise. It is the place where things looked good for us and then turned bad. Leaving was the beginning of our disaster. We could never get back what we'd had there.

"Spirit of place" is a fashionable concept these days, but it's also a misleading one. Places don't have spirits; we do. Our own assumptions and associations — whether emotional or intellectual — can imbue places with meanings that seem to be universal. But in fact, when we speak about "spirit of place" we are, in some sense, always speaking about personal experience.

Today Putnam looks exactly as I remember it; nothing has been torn down, or spiffed up. It is intact and saved — but to me it seems utterly lost. No one shopping downtown today would know enough to call it that. The buildings are like snail shells housing hermit crabs; the original creatures, for whom the shells were made, aren't there anymore. The original creatures have died, or gone to Wal-Mart.

But then, the original creatures — the men who built the mills and the French-Canadian workers who came down to work in them — disappeared long ago. A town never really belongs to anyone; someone else was always there first. At the same time, the opposite is true: a town belongs to the people who live and work and shop there today. The antiques dealers have made a commitment to the town and its economy which has already outlasted my family's fickle decade there. I stand on the main street of this place from my past, which now survives by selling the past, and realize that of course the past I yearn for isn't here. The young sales clerks selling the pricey vintage Pez dispensers will have their own lives, their own stories.

Joan Wickersham lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She is the author of The Paper Anniversary (Viking) and is finishing a new novel.
Building the Best in New England

Union Masonry Craftworkers & Contractors
The Best Hands in the Business

Every construction project requires teamwork. Not only among the architects, developers, and trades, but especially between the contractors, craftworkers and consultants. Team IMI is the union of these three partners.

Our goal is to ensure that you always have enough of the world class union craftworkers and contractors you need to complete your project - no matter how big, how elaborate or how visionary it may be. Our promise is that we do every job with a sense of pride and accomplishment unmatched in the masonry industry.

IMI provides training to the masonry industry and design assistance to the architectural community.

For further information contact:
The International Masonry Institute
2 Park Plaza, Suite 315
Boston, MA 02116
Tel: 800-IMI-0988

225 Grandview Drive
Glastonbury, CT 06033
Tel: 800-IMI-0988
Mold growth requires moisture, oxygen and an organic food source such as found in paper and wood building materials. Concrete masonry, however, is not a food source for mold. That's just one of the many advantages of using concrete masonry in construction projects of all types.

Mold Prevention requires proper design and climate control in buildings.

Concrete Masonry is the Right Choice!
Structural Engineering Solutions

A/V Integrated To Your Vision

- Auditoriums
- Board Rooms
- Classrooms
- Conference Rooms
- Retail/Entertainment
- Training Facilities

Plasma Displays with Interactive Overlays, just one example of the unique audio-visual collaborative solutions Crimson provides.

Ask how Crimson Tech can design and implement an integrated presentation system for effective delivery of your vision.

CRIMSON TECH
Audio Visual. Nonesuch and Digital Media Solutions

Wilmington, Massachusetts
Putnam, Connecticut

800.868.5150
www.crimsontech.com

Is your success built on the work of others?

You didn’t become a successful architect by wearing a blindfold.

You stood up for your vision, and you realized it with cutting-edge software.
You want others to respect your creativity.
Software developers deserve the same respect.
Stand up for them. Fight software piracy.
Report software theft. Learn about proper software management.

Visit www.bsaarchitect.com

BSA
Business Software Alliance
WE DO COMMERCIAL!
Dedicated to providing product and design solutions that meet every challenge.

PROJECT SPECIALTIES
• New Construction
• Renovation
• Historic Restoration
• Health Care
• Retail
• Education

ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES
• Factory Trips
• Box Lunch Presentations
• AIA/CeU’s
• CD-Rom
• Cad Support
• Project Consultation

PELLA® WINDOWS & DOORS INC, BOSTON
45 FONDI ROAD • HAVERHILL, MA 01830
TEL: 978-521-7100 • FAX: 978-373-8084
TOLLFREE: 800-866-9886 X134
Vice President of Sales: Jack Needham • jneedham@pellaboston.com
No matter what you need for your outdoor environment, there's only one place you need to call—O'Brien & Sons, New England's recreation specialists. Along with providing you with the widest selection of high quality athletic and recreation equipment, we represent the world's finest site furnishing companies.

So whether you're looking for the coolest new stuff for your playground or ways to warm up a park setting, give us a call. As the oldest and largest company of its kind, you won't find better value, service or selection anywhere. Only Mother Nature can provide you with more elements for a great outdoors.

Elements For a Great Outdoors.

93 West Street
P.O. Box 650
Medfield, Massachusetts 02052-0650
508-359-4200
800-835-0056
Fax: 508-359-2817

Payette Associates has convinced us to examine our own creative culture, and they have filled our scientific places with the essence of Harvard's humanistic spirit.

Payette Associates of Boston, in association with The Images Publishing Group, is pleased to announce the publishing of its first monograph, An Evolution of Ideas, as part of the Master Architect Series.

A year in the making, the monograph represents 40 projects which cover 40 years of the firm's practice. The book illustrates the firm's philosophy centered on planning and designing spaces for people. Carefully composed and written, the book reveals an evolution of the firm's growth from which ideas were born by its past practitioners and carried forward by the current partnership.

Order online at www.architects.org and click on "BSA Store"
In 1970, Italian architect Paolo Soleri (right) began a project that would become his life's work: the construction of Arcosanti, an experimental town in the desert north of Phoenix. At the beginning of the environmental movement, but still years before sustainability had entered our vocabulary, Arcosanti was planned as a community for 5,000 people embracing the idea that an urban environment could be created with minimal effect upon the earth. Now, 35 years later, Arcosanti is not yet complete, yet thousands of people visit annually and some stay to continue the work.

Jeff Stein AIA is the architecture critic for Banker & Tradesman and professor of architecture at Wentworth Institute of Technology. He is a trustee of the Cosanti Foundation and spent eight years working on Arcosanti.
JEFF STEIN: In 1970 you mounted an exhibition, *The Architectural Vision of Paolo Soleri*, at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington. A quarter of a million people showed up. That was the largest number of people ever to attend an exhibition in the history of the Corcoran, largest number ever to attend an exhibition of architecture in the world, outside of a World's Fair.

PAOLO SOLERI: If you say so.

JEFF STEIN: Oh, it's true. What was it about that exhibition that so captured people's imaginations?

PAOLO SOLERI: It was a mix, I guess, of things that I was very engaged in at that time, a combination of architecture and craft, and looking toward a hopeful future for the city. And my book *Arcology: City in the Age of Man* had just been published.

JEFF STEIN: That book became a classic. I ordered while I was a student. It came in the mail and I opened it up and it was five feet long, filled with drawings of three-dimensional cityscapes. At the bottom of the otherwise-blank first page it said, his book is about miniaturization."

PAOLO SOLERI: That was my quote. I'm still with now more than ever.

JEFF STEIN: What do you mean by miniaturization?"

PAOLO SOLERI: In vulgar terms, it is "doing more with less." In less vulgar terms, it means that what you might call "reality" has to become more productive. His ties very directly with the physical notions of distance, separation, noise, and inefficiency. My great example is the automobile, a big, non-miniaturized meddle of logistics that has a very negative impact on the city.

JEFF STEIN: And yet you live in Scottsdale, Arizona, a city that is among the most auto-dependent on earth.

PAOLO SOLERI: I grew up in Northern Italy and, after World War II and receiving a diploma in architecture, I came to study at Taliesin with Frank Lloyd Wright, who was in Scottsdale. Later, when my wife and I came back to America after building in Italy, we naturally settled in Scottsdale. There I was taken by this notion that the city is something not to abandon but something to cultivate, because that's where civilization comes from. So I began to stretch my ideas — drawings, models — that ended up being seen as blueprints for a city, which I never intended for them to be. They were just symbols that implied spatial arrangements that could be filled by culture and society.

JEFF STEIN: The Boston Society of Architects recently sponsored a conference on density. One of the sessions was called "Density: The New American Dream." You have written so much about this very issue; did you imagine that you would live long enough to see density become the new American dream?

PAOLO SOLERI: No. And it does not appear that "density" is a goal for contemporary Western civilization. I certainly don't think it's a concept with many followers in the United States.

JEFF STEIN: And yet you have always imagined in your work that density is an imperative.

PAOLO SOLERI: Yes. But I want to distinguish between "density" and "miniaturization." A chunk of iron is very dense but that has little to do with miniaturization. Miniaturization has to be connected with what's going on in that miniaturized container; and what's going on in a chunk of iron is not very much. Architects and designers often talk about container and content, a discussion that I reject because I don't believe in those kinds of theories. But if you take this notion of container and content, then miniaturization speaks about a minimal container that contains a maximum of life. If you want to have a highly complex system, and you understand the experience of organisms on the earth, then you must also aspire to great miniaturization.

JEFF STEIN: The fact is that all organisms — humans included — appear to be both miniaturized and quite complex. And the issue that you have pioneered, "arcology" — architecture and ecology — places this notion of organism together with urbanism.
Fresh from graduate school in early 1975, I signed on to a six-week construction workshop at Arcosanti, Arizona, anxious to take my first trip to the American Southwest. Eight years later, I left Arcosanti for Boston. In between were some of the most rigorous, challenging, creative, joyful days of my existence.

The world’s most beautiful construction site — Arcosanti — is perched on the edge of a mesa 70 miles north of Phoenix, in the high desert of central Arizona. For the hundred people who live there year ‘round, it provides a kind of a “fishbowl” existence. The staff is constantly training amateurs to draw, dig, build, to accomplish the work itself, all surrounded by tourists every day. And when I was there, making models, stripping concrete forms, learning crane signals, welding window frames, we engaged in deep simultaneous discussions about the future of the city, about (back then) how to predict solar gain with punch cards, about people living near where they work, about budgeting time to wade into the sewage treatment oxidation pond to harvest water hyacinths, experiencing through the work how everything connects to everything.

Work was often interrupted by visitors: presidential candidates and politicians looking for the future and for great scenery. I met Betty Friedan there. Jerry Brown came to spend the week and left with ideas that later formed the core of the California Urban Initiative. Performing-arts events at the construction site provided a home away from home for Jackson Browne, other musicians, performers, and thinkers. Paul Earls and Otto Piene came out from the MIT Center for Advanced Visual Studies. And architects arrived: I first met Philip Johnson at Arcosanti. He, like me, like thousands of people since then, was drawn to the work and optimistic personality of its originator, Paolo Soleri.

After a while the extraordinary became the norm. A television crew from Japan would show up, or a group of BBC journalists on a tour of the US. They’d always begin, “We are here in the desert where a small group of people are reinventing the city.” We did think we were doing that, in our heart of hearts. Yet the whole idea was so far-fetched that we seldom uttered it. We wouldn’t take ourselves that seriously. Instead we awoke every morning to the sound of windbells, a morning construction meeting, hearty meals right out of Arcosanti’s extensive organic gardens. And of course there was the design and construction work itself, every day, something we did take seriously. It was a balanced and complex life, urbane and frugal in the extreme.

At an Arcosanti conference in 1981, Peter Blake sat with me on the edge of a cliff overlooking the curving forms of the construction site in the near distance. “You’re ready to move to Boston,” he suggested. Bostonian Ron Gourley was seated next to him. By then the dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Arizona and a frequent visitor to Arcosanti, Gourley concurred. A year later I was living in Cambridge. But I brought Arcosanti with me. As in one of Italo Calvino’s Invisible Cities, I only need glance at the night sky. “There is the blueprint,” it says.

— Jeff Stein AIA
OLO SOLERI: I hope so. Keep in mind though that an organism without transcendence into self-knowledge or self-awareness exists on a level that does not comprehend the urban system. The beehive, an organism that is so often cited by critics as an example of a natural community, doesn’t reflect the dimension of culture, the dimension of intellect, that we are the bearers of. A beehive now is identical to a beehive of a million years ago, and that doesn’t work at all with the idea of a city cause a city, besides being a structure and a social system, is a cultural system. That makes a gigantic difference.

JEFF STEIN: I’m thinking that your notion of transcendence, self-knowledge that comes about from being a part of a miniaturized and complex urban container, is what spirit is.

OLO SOLERI: The city, at least, is the kind of environmental situation where complexity that leads to transcendence can really flourish. And accepting the fact that we are going from the tribal to the metropolitan, there is an enormous gap of knowledge, of intensity, of joy and suffering between these two states of being. These conditions — tribal and ban — are almost not comparable, which should make so-called environmentalists pause now and then. Those who explain that “a return to nature” was called for at this juncture in our evolution expose themselves as people who don’t really know what they are talking about.

JEFF STEIN: Around 1970 you began to construct experimental new town, Arcosanti, 70 miles north of Phoenix. How did you imagine that would be a good idea? I know, for instance, that Charles Eames, the industrial and graphic designer and filmmaker, warned you about doing such a foolish thing.

OLO SOLERI: I remember Charles being at Arcosanti at the beginning, filming me making models for two or three days.

JEFF STEIN: According to his writing, Eames suggested that this would be a hugely difficult undertaking, creating a model city in the central Arizona desert, and that funding would be hard to get. And it was so outside the mainstream of materialist American culture that it had almost no chance at all of success.

PAOLO SOLERI: And he was damn right! But for Charles the mistake was — and I corrected him — that I have not attempted with Arcosanti to make a model city. I’m trying to set up a laboratory. So that really takes me out of the Utopian stream, an idealized movement that is so stupid to me. Isolating the problems, coming down to a minimal demand — and a minimal hope, in a way — but trying all the while to stick to some of the very basic rules of reality — that’s what we are doing now.

JEFF STEIN: The theologian John Cobb wrote this about you in the early 1980s: “Few of us realize that much of the problem of our civilization is caused by the way our cities are built, but hardly anyone proposes serious alternatives. The one great exception is Paolo Soleri.” Theology is a critical field for you and for anyone who wants to understand your work. There are people who imagine that your work is the embodiment of the ideas of the French Jesuit philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin earlier in the century. But Chardin’s model of reality, as you point out in some of your writing, was revelational, in which reality is revealed by some divine presence. Your model is creationist.

PAOLO SOLERI: By that I simply mean that reality doesn’t start with something divine or superior, or a graceful something that might be called spirit, or even God. Reality starts instead with a brute, mindless, meaningless, raging violence: the Big Bang. From there it is a process — I call it “becoming” — of reality transforming itself. This transformation goes on and on. Within mindless and meaningless reality is the beginning of something we call “life” and life is where our willfulness appears. And from there on, we go from bacteria to the great people who appear throughout life. And we are all great people. Keep in mind we are miracles. Miracles upon miracles.

JEFF STEIN: And the city is one of those miracles?

PAOLO SOLERI: It’s coming together of those miracles that otherwise tend to be self-isolating, though very gregarious. But in the American ethos we say, “No, I want to express myself fully, so I’m going to be a person with my own intent, my own pleasure, my own desires, and don’t bug me.” That’s the end of civilization, I think.

JEFF STEIN: When you think about the city in terms of “arcology,” architecture and ecology, are you suggesting it requires a certain form?
PAOLO SOLERI: First I would say that containment is essential. That’s why Los Angeles is so difficult to handle, impossible even. Because like an organism, a city needs boundaries. Why should architecture be invasive of the land? Why should the land say, “No, you can’t build cities, because that’s against my nature” — as is the case now? We have formed mistaken and unnecessary boundaries around land and cities. But cities need containment, even if this means some kind of legal statement that says, “One more person is not possible in this phenomenon; let’s build a new city; let’s build a baby so to speak. Let’s build another feature that will take care of the demographic pressure.”

JEFF STEIN: Of course that is exactly what happens to other organisms.

PAOLO SOLERI: But cities are not yet clearly understood by most people to be organisms. Currently, they grow to be giants and then super giants. But they could make babies. Why not make babies?

JEFF STEIN: This takes the idea of organic architecture to a really fundamental level. When people visit Arcosanti, and around 50,000 do each year, they often come away exclaiming at the extraordinary sense of place there, how you and those around you have captured the spirit of the place. What are they talking about, in your terms?

PAOLO SOLERI: Well, we hope that they sense how we have been imaginative in generating spaces and so on. But mainly it is this notion of containment, the fact of doing more with less. The proposition is that something is going on at Arcosanti that could be very, very important for our society.

JEFF STEIN: But what you are proposing is in conflict with the current American dream, a sprawling, big, individualistic, materialistic condition in which the most materials possible are produced and consumed.

PAOLO SOLERI: If there is an ideal machine that caters to production and consumption, it is the exurban situation. That is where the most consumptive society is going to develop itself.

JEFF STEIN: The only question is, how long can it continue?

PAOLO SOLERI: Since humans are very smart, we can create all sorts of devices that can carry on this process. One way is to ignore the fact that half of humanity is far from that dream and a quarter of humanity is almost in a state of dereliction.

JEFF STEIN: And so there is an issue, not only about the general reverence for life that organizing a city in an organic fashion brings to the foreground, but also about a kind of equity.

PAOLO SOLERI: Yes. One of my core principles has to do with equity. “Equity” and “aesthetic” cannot be separated ultimately. Just as I don’t think that we can distinguish between the ethical and the aesthetic. Take, for instance, the “creation” in Christianity. We keep preaching to ourselves that this has to do with the garden of Eden and benevolence and so on. The fact is, it connects very much with the aesthetic that Christianity has developed, and the greatness of some of the Christian painters, sculptors, architects, poets. So in a way, in Christianity, the aesthetic is not a function of the Church; the Church is a function of the aesthetic.

JEFF STEIN: How does Arcosanti work as an urban laboratory? There are still people who go there to live and work and there are buildings being constructed.

PAOLO SOLERI: It works very minimally, and the main reason is that we don’t have many resources. It’s a building site that, instead of going 100 miles an hour, goes two miles an hour. It is difficult for anyone there to keep in mind that maybe they’re working on something that has important things to say. But we have people, we are going on, and we remember that we are a tiny fragment of anything that could be called a city. Moving in an open space where vested interests were very minimal, and then having a certain impression of young people coming and helping us, made me think that that was a moment to use, to try to develop this laboratory. So it’s a little village, a fragment of a little village, but it has something to point at now. And we’re still at it 35 years later.
BASF engineered urethane construction materials provide insulation and air barrier system continuity throughout the building envelope. Our WALLTITE system meets or exceeds all the new air barrier codes. It also contributes to improved durability, energy efficiency and improved occupant comfort, health and safety.
We invite you and your client to our new showroom to experience residential and corporate electronics in real applications.


Audio Video Design
877-999-1900
www.avdesigns.com

Elegantly simple lighting solutions for simply elegant results.

Audio Video

Audio Video Design
877-999-1900
www.avdesigns.com

Respectful collaboration you can count on.
www.mtruant.com

Harness the Power of Connectivity.
Your Designs... Our Technical Expertise.
If you're looking to make a statement for your client, the professionals at HB Communications can provide a seamless blend of integrated A/V technology designed and installed for practicality and effortless operation.

- Boardrooms
- Conference Rooms
- Training Rooms
- Classrooms
- Auditoriums
- Houses of Worship
- Entertainment Display

HB Communications, Inc.
North Haven Connecticut | Waltham Massachusetts
1.800.243.4414 | www.hbcommunications.com

Dynamic Display | Control Systems | Collaboration Tools

Manufactured by Litelab Corp.
800/230-4120
specs@litelab.com

Represented in the Boston area by
The Reflex Lighting Group
617/269-4510 info@reflexlighting.com

specs for this fixture (and others) at: http://www.litelab.com/document_217.html
North Atlantic Corp.'s Architectural Services Group offers:
- Cad Support
- CNC Technology
- Products on CD Rom
- Box Lunch Presentations
- AIA/CEU’s

We service Lumberyards through Martin-NAMCO and Builders through Horner Millwork.

Kolbe & Kolbe Windows and Doors

Cooper Stairworks

Custom Windows & Doors

www.northatlanticcorp.com

508-235-4265

Indus - doors - kitchens - stairs
INTEGRATED BUILDERS
From the Ground-Up

Pharm-Eco Laboratories
Devens, MA 160,000 SF
Depuy/Johnson & Johnson
Raynham, MA 40,000 SF
Control Delivery
Watertown, MA 40,000 SF
Central Place Apartments
Malden, MA 75,000 SF
Black Rock Golf Community
Hingham, MA 52,000 SF
Chateau Mercedes
Westwood, MA 60,000 SF
Winchester Place Condominiums
Winchester, MA 37,000 SF
Castle Storage
Weymouth, MA 45,000 SF
Clair Honda
West Roxbury, MA 35,000 SF

Integrated Builders wraps up finishing touches at Winchester Place Condominiums, a first-class, 11-unit development located in downtown Winchester.

INTEGRATED BUILDERS
1515 Washington Street, Braintree, Massachusetts 02184
Phone (781) 356-3838
www.integratedbuilders.com

Some of the best lab design ideas...

...happen while in the shower.

- Laboratory Casework
- Fume Hoods
- Table Systems
- Laboratory Fixtures
- Installation

NewEnglandLab
Laboratory Furniture Systems
3 Arrow Drive • Woburn, MA 01801
781.932.9980 • Fax 781.932.9981 • www.newenglandlab.com

books
AIA documents
gifts

BOSTON SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS
STORE.architects.or
Westbrook Concrete Block Co. Inc.

Providing the widest selection of architectural concrete masonry units

- Polished
- Ground Face
- Deco-Face
- Split Units
- Standard
- Firerated
- Insulated
- Brick Block
- Retaining Wall
- Sound Block
- Dry Block
- Pavers

Ozark Kids - Childcare Facility

Winner of:
- New England Concrete Masonry Association (NECMA) Excellence in Design Award
- International Masonry Institute (IMI) Golden Trowel Award

Build Boston

in us at booth #1018

439 Spencer Plain Road
Westbrook, CT 06498
Phone: 860-399-6201
www.westbrookblock.com
Want to redesign the world?... Read about those who have in “Builders of Dreams.” U.S. News & World Report’s special issue on “the stones, steel, and heavenly spires [that] have touched the lives of millions” (June 30/July 7, 2003). One part Cliff Notes, one part architectural history, one part cultural studies lesson, this series of sound bytes presents surprisingly thorough, balanced tales of how and why large design projects have transformed the Western (mostly American) world. Expected “great list” examples like the interstate highway system, the Brooklyn Bridge, and Olmsted are interspersed with less-heard tales of people and places like the 17th-century landfill project to wrestle a northern harbor's marshy settlement into a city. Think Boston? Think again — it's Peter the Great, and the city that again bears his name.

GPS is cool... From 11,000 miles above the earth, 28 satellites track the moves of Global Positioning System chips around the globe. Embedded in everything from hand-held FedEx signature machines to tractors to personal cell phones, GPS tracks the movement of people and product to an accuracy of one foot. Laptops, even toddlers, can be tagged so they are never lost. Over the past decade, it has quietly become indispensable to most industries. “Will yours be next?” asks Charles Fishman in Fast Company in “The Sky's the Limit” (July 2003). The possibilities of this extraordinary accuracy are still emerging.

Another new new thing... Apparently Architecture’s not the only magazine suffering an awkward redesign. Wallpaper*’s infamous asterisk finally received a reason to exist, heralding the magazine’s “new look” (June 2003). It was better when the asterisk was unemployed. Although sometimes obnoxious, the sharp writing, dense content, excellent design sense, and over-the-top innuendos (that made any Austin Powers fan proud) once defined an original, intelligent high end for the glossy shelter mags. Now redesigned, Wallpaper* promises instead to be “elegant and accessible; sophisticated and sexy.” Unfortunately, the pages pro otherwise; bodies are bared while substantive design content is lost. Alas, watered-down wallpaper is exact that: soggy.

Galaxy of stars... With Arnold on Newsweek (August 2003) and Prince William on Vanity Fair (September 2003), who else could be inside both but Frank Gehry in “A Mighty Monument to Music” and “Roll Over Bilbao,” Cathleen McGuigan and Matt Tymnaur respectively argue that the Guggenheim was but a test drive. Gehry’s Walt Disney Concert Hall for the Los Angeles Philharmonic will be his true masterwork. These celebratory, comprehensive articles each detail 8the hall’s extended political and financial saga while outlining its author’s career in terms generally reserved for a favorite uncle. Ultimately they also unwittingly provide yet more evidence of the narrowness of our architectural celebrity stratosphere.

Vital signs... “What does it mean, today, to be vital?” asks David Haskell, editor of Topic magazine’s issue three on “The Vital City.” Edited in Cambridge (the U.S. and New York, Topic is a new quarterly nonfiction journal featuring changing, um, topics. Contributors include active participants in their respective fields, well-established names interspersed with a few fresh ones. A sample from this “city” issue: Alexander Garvin comments on the legacy of Robert Moses. Bill Mitchell predicts the effect of cyberspace on real space. Photographer Jose Picayo and painter Tom Slaughter show their work side-by-side from Havana and New York. Saskia Sassen asks, “Who belongs in the global city?” Ben Hurwitz presents LA through the twenty-something eyes of a wanna-be screenwriter. John Scarlton talks trash. The vibrant variety of voices with these pages suggests the possibilities implied by the editor’s opening: “Should Disney World close tomorrow, the universe would be a few Plutos fewer and so much the wiser.”

Here we go again... They tore down an urban neighborhood in order to save it. They held an international competition and built the dullest design. They wonder why the buildings are full, but the plaza is always empty. Sound familiar? Egos, intrigue, and ill-fated plans are all here, too, in Paul Goldberger’s in-depth account of New York’s ongoing Lincoln Center renovation. In “West Side Fixer-Upper” (The New Yorker, July 7, 2003), Goldberger discusses former proposals and the new design team, suggesting that Diller + Scofidio’s accessible presentations and ground-level tinkering will now save the day. Maybe when they’re finished, they could take a look at Boston’s City Hall Plaza.
Residence Halls
made with precast

Energy Efficient  •  Excellent Fire and Safety Ratings

Plank Span Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Type</th>
<th>Floor</th>
<th>Roof</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6&quot; Plank</td>
<td>20'</td>
<td>22'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8&quot; Plank</td>
<td>30'</td>
<td>32'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10&quot; Plank</td>
<td>36'</td>
<td>38'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12&quot; Plank</td>
<td>42'</td>
<td>45'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16&quot; Plank</td>
<td>50'</td>
<td>55'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quality  Value  Experience

Oldcastle Precast®
Building Systems Division
South Bethlehem, NY

www.oldcastleprecast.com
e-mail: bsd@oldcastleprecast.com
888.232.6274
THE MODULAR ALTERNATIVE TO MILLWORK

We Design & Furnish:
MAILROOMS
COMPUTER ROOMS
SECURITY STATIONS
SATELLITE MAIL STOPS
FORM STORAGE AREAS
COPY CENTERS

With Adjustable & Ergonomic
HAMILTON SORTER FURNITURE

www.designadvantage.net

DESIGN ADVANTAGE
(617) 364-7719

Program Management • Construction Management • Design/Build

Erland
Building Solutions Through Commitment and Teamwork
Erland Construction, Inc. | 83 Second Avenue | Burlington, Massachusetts 01803
1:781.272.9440 | e:prince@erland.com | www.erland.com

"The Old Grey Screen
Just Ain't What It Used To Be."

At Phantom, we're changing the way you see door and window screens. As the leading provider of retractable screen solutions we offer a versatile family of products that disappear out of sight when you don't need them.

Innovative, stylish, visually pleasing, designed and crafted with quality. Phantom has the solution to your screening and shading needs.

Discover The Retractable Screen Solution

PHANTOM SCREENS
VISION SCREENS
EXECUTIVE SCREENS

Find out more at: www.phantomscreens.com
or for a distributor near you call:
1-888-PHANTOM (1-888-747-6866)
617 323 4870

Looking for the ideal consultant, contractor, or product for your project?
Find all the resources you need...
inside theGuide

www.architects.org/theguide

theGuide is an online searchable directory that is viewed by more than 4,000 unique visitors a month.
Shouldn't you be looking at it, too?
Bergmeyer
Institutional | Housing | Food Service | Corporate Interiors | Commercial | Retail

Harvard University
The Center for the Study of World Religions
Cambridge, MA

Architecture and Interiors
Bergmeyer Associates, Inc.
246 Congress Street
Boston, MA 02210
Phone 617 542 1025
www.bergmeyer.com

CAMPBELL-McCABE, INC.
85 CENTRAL STREET, SUITE 102, WALTHAM, MA 02453-USA

Independent experts in 08710 Architectural Door Hardware and providers of detailed Specifications for all building types.

- Review of openings for code compliance
- Life Safety
- ADA compliance
- Coordination with other trades
- Access Control and Security Interface
- Construction Administration

Member CSI, DHI, NFPA, SBCCI

T. 781.899.8822 F. 781.899.9444 E.cm@cmiahc.com
www.cmiahc.com
Spirit and Place
by Christopher Day
Architectural Press, 2002
Reviewed by Andrew St. John AIA

Progressive human culture looks for the causes of human behavior, seeking to improve society and the world around us. By contrast, the world of commerce is essentially reductionist. Costs that aren’t easily calculated for the quarterly bottom line, like aesthetics or community betterment, tend to be excised from traditional corporate programs.

To survive in the commercial world, many people separate their progressive instincts from their commercial selves. Christopher Day seeks to overcome this duality, to bring human values into the world of work and, in the case of design, to have the built environment reinforce rather than erode positive social values.

This book is both inspiring and frustrating. It’s inspiring because Day—a Welsh architect and writer who has built his career around sustainability—has it so right: “We have traded privations and truth for stress and appearance.” “The antithesis of nature is not humanity, industry, pollution. It is thought.” “For stress relief, we turn toward the natural; for intellectual challenge, toward the urban.” He has a comprehensive grasp of how things go together and where they come from. And he has a healthy skepticism about the value of technology in solving design problems.

His design ideas for addressing contemporary social problems flow like water, demonstrating, for example, that design can facilitate community interaction. He wants us to design with care — about the place, about the people who are to use our designs, about the community in which they exist. He addresses the full range of design, from building health to traffic control, using a participatory design process — rather than for people, seeking “consensus based on underlying values.”

The frustration arrives because Day tries to do too much. He wants nothing less than to lead us through an exploration of human consciousness and experience, couched in terms of design, to arrive at a new world-view, one which values people, community, and spirit over material accomplishment. He has a hard time categorizing his own excellent ideas in a structure recognizable to design professionals. He is prepared to sift analysis, strategy, and example from almost every paragraph. A book like this begs the question of whether healthy design is possible in a society so skewed toward the material. One wonders whether this kind of creative energy might be better spent in more direct social work.

In the end, there is nothing wrong with a cosmic approach to design, and a great deal of contemporary work would profit immensely from Day’s wider perspective: “It is the values imprinted by how buildings are used (and financed, designed, constructed and maintained) that imparts spirit.” Too much design energy is invested in projects whose sole motive is profit. We need more Christopher Days, committed to making the world a better place.

Andrew St. John AIA manages development projects for nonprofit and commercial clients.

Architecture for the Gods: Book II
by Michael J. Crosbie
Images Publishing, 2002
Reviewed by William Morgan

What is it about books on contemporary church architecture that renders the subject insipid, sterile, and devoid of soul? Maybe it is the photography? Typical of the genre are the images in Architecture for the Gods: what may be exciting spaces seem homogenized by assiduous perspective correction, perfect lighting, and polarized skies. The result is like a freshly varnished coffin.

Ecclesiastical architecture, however ancient its traditions, is still challenging, especially in a nation so obsessed with religion. Both architects and clergymen need stronger publications on church design. As John Wesley Cook of the Luce Foundation notes in the introduction, “The clergy are not prepared to take seriously the language of architecture for the church’s mission.”

Michael Crosbie, the editor of Faith & Form magazine and author of the 1999 prequel to this volume, generally does much to foster the discussion of spiritual architecture. Nevertheless, this book appears to be an anthology written by the featured architects. The text reads like a press release to accompany the crowd-pleaser photos. The Church of Conscious Harmony is, for example, “built to human scale with honest materials, is well suited to the land upon which it sits and to the practice of the faith of this congregation.”

Following demographic trends, the Southwest is home to lots of churches. Equally unsurprising, Episcopalians and Lutherans remain more consistently interested in aesthetics. A handful of the dozen Catholic churches shown are almost all right, while some of the nine synagogues — Lake/Flato’s Aguda Achim in Austin and Kliman & Halsband’s Center for Jewish Life Dartmouth — are stunning.

The pretentiously titled Architecture for the Gods shows that churches are getting bigger, which is better, unless you commission Cram, Wren, or the Master of Chертanes. Mega-churches designed to hold evangelical congregations are the images in this small frame building around James Turrell’s “Skyspace,” a 12-foot square opening in the roof. Simplest of all the buildings in Architecture for the Gods, it is cosmic, poetic, a powerful.

A volume like this can be a problem for better church design — the kind of visual aid architects pass around church building committees in hopes of raising aspirations. Yet the best religious architecture deals with mystery, and many of the churches in Architecture for the Gods would have been better served by less architectural photography.

William Morgan is an architecture critic based in Providence, Rhode Island. He is the author of Country Churches, which will be published in spring 2004 by Abrams.

William J. Crosbie, the editor of Faith & Form magazine and author of the 1999 prequel to this volume, generally does much to foster the discussion of spiritual architecture. Nevertheless, this book appears to be an anthology written by the featured architects. The text reads like a press release to accompany the crowd-pleaser photos. The Church of Conscious Harmony is, for example, “built to human scale with honest materials, is well suited to the land upon which it sits and to the practice of the faith of this congregation.”
intense emotional and religious experience, but soon an outrageous assemblage of distractions — trinket sellers, fast-talking guides, sideshows — preempted the sublimity of the Falls. By the 1830s, the experience of Niagara had already become a cliché.

Sears illuminates the power of geological formation to intensify emotion in his unique comparison of the traveler's experience of Yosemite with that of Yellowstone. Yosemite represented the height of sublime grandeur, while Yellowstone was a study in weirdness: boiling sulfur springs, geysers, hot cauldrons of mud.

The power of God was also seen in sites of denser human habitation. Sears includes a chapter on prisons, asylums, cemeteries, and parks. The creation of new urban infrastructure in the early 19th century moved these institutions to the green edges of cities, where they attracted both American and European visitors in awe of the technology and the uplifting quality of the facilities. Sears describes the garden cemetery as an extension of domestic tranquility, banishing the gloom and crowded conditions of the urban churchyard. "The dead," he notes "were the first people to move to the suburbs."

Originally published in 1989, this book was among the first in a growing body of tourism literature. In a rare example of scholarly generosity, Sears offers a preface to this paperback edition that examines the professional growth of his field and adds an annotated list of literature that has appeared since his first edition — literature that expands on several aspects of his discourse. His book continues to offer critical background for the history of America preservation, conservation, and national character.

Phyllis Andersen is Fellow for Cultural Landscape Studies of the Landscape Institute of the Arnold Arboretum in Boston and is a member of the ArchitectureBoston editorial board.
Works well in really big places. Like your imagination.

Custom creations or timeless classics. KML by Andersen™ Entranceways can help you create almost anything you can envision. Options include select woods, clad exteriors, custom divided light patterns, commercial ADA approved sill, decorative art glass and hardware. Imagination, of course, is standard.

Serving New England Architects since 1890.

Brockway-Smith Company
Brosco Commercial Group
800-225-2232

Mark Daley
SE MA, Cape Cod
Ext. 7440

Sean Graziano
Connecticut
Ext. 7432

David Kern
Boston, Northshore & So. NH
Ext. 7403

Pete Kodys
RI, Central MA
Ext. 7470

Steve Lavigne
Maine, No. NH
Ext. 7443

Jim Stall
NY, VT & Western MA
Ext. 7428

Matt Quinn
Andersen Commercial Account Representative
New England & Eastern NY
781-934-5195 Fax: 781-934-5196
e-mail: mquinn@andersencorp.com

www.brosco.com
www.andersenwindows.com
Site Work

Websites of note

Tofte Project
www.tofteproject.org
Take one simple idea — building a cabin in the woods — and turn it into a powerful Web-based statement about spirit and interconnection.

Alaska Native Knowledge Network
www.ankn.uaf.edu
Sponsored by the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the Network provides access to “the knowledge base that Alaska Natives have acquired through cumulative experience over millennia” and includes links to information about indigenous cultures around the world.

National Coalition to Save Our Mall
www.savemall.org
Nature abhors a vacuum. So do advocacy groups and government agencies, and as a result, the National Mall in Washington, DC, is in danger of becoming a memorial theme park. Here’s one group whose designs on the Mall don’t include construction.

North Shore Spirit
www.northshorespirit.com
Professional baseball as it is meant to be — fun, cheap, and easy. Former money manager Nick Lopardo has brought his new team to the renovated Fraser Field in Lynn, Massachusetts. You won’t even care if they lose when you can entertain the whole family for the price of one Fenway ticket.

Material History of American Religion Project
www.materialreligion.org
Based at Vanderbilt University, the Project presents “the history of American religion in all its complexity by focusing on material objects and economic themes.” Excellent bibliography on religious architecture.

Sacred Sites International
www.sitesaver.org
“A non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of sacred sites and their traditional cultures.”

Partners for Sacred Places
www.sacredplaces.org
“The only national, non-sectarian, non-profit organization dedicated to the sound stewardship and active community use of America’s older religious properties.”

We’re always looking for intriguing websites, however mysterious the connection to architecture. Send your candidates to: epadjori@architects.org
When I was a girl growing up in the suburbs of Boston, my father would regularly take us to his old neighborhood in Philadelphia. His parents, Russian-Jewish immigrants who had fled the pogroms, lived above their tailor-supply shop in an L-shaped apartment that spanned 11 feet at its widest. It was always with a sense of longing that I listened to my father's stories about his childhood: throwing pebbles at his best friend's bedroom window to call him to play baseball, sneaking out of the crowded shtetl while services droned on, jumping on the back of trucks until tragically — he witnessed his friend's leg crushed underneath. This was the world I wanted, not the antiseptic environment in which I grew up, where diversity meant busing in black kids from Roxbury, where to be a Jew meant having an extravagant Bar Mitzvah, where every activity required premeditation and carpools.

With a similar air of nostalgia, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum recreates the lives of various immigrant families who inhabited the building on 97 Orchard Street between its 1863 construction and 1935, when all but one of its families were evicted because it failed to comply with the housing reforms implemented by Mayor LaGuardia, himself a refugee of tenement housing. In 1900, the block on which it is located — between Broome and Delancey — was the most densely populated place on earth, housing over 2,200 people, almost all of them recent immigrants. Businesses continued to operate out of the ground floor between 1935 and 1990, but the upper floors were largely abandoned, and therefore something of a time capsule, until the museum was established in 1988. The hallways — now dimly lit to evoke the period before central lighting was mandated in 1901 — maintain many turn-of-the-century details: elaborately patterned ceilings of steel and iron alloy, dark, leathery wallpaper made of burlap soaked in linseed oil, and the white mosaic floors with specks of blue and maroon common to many prewar New York City buildings. In the various apartments, restorers uncovered an average of 20 layers of wallpaper, imprints of the many families who passed through and briefly made 97 Orchard Street their home.

The memories of Josephine Baldizzi, daughter of a cabinetmaker and factory worker from Sicily, pervade the apartment across the hall. She moved into 97 Orchard Street during the Great Depression with parents and brother, who was later hit by car and suffered serious leg injuries. Hearing her recount (via recording) how her mother rose at 5:00 a.m. to haggle with street peddlers, or how she turned on the lights for her Jewish neighbors every Shabbat, powerfully conjures the vibrant and close community of the Lower East Side.

As a group of tourists gathered outside the museum, listening to stories of how the immigrants on the Lower East Side once lived, a middle-aged Chinese man pushed his way through the crowd, balancing a heavy load of boxes and sweating in the summer heat. Had they followed him a few blocks south into the heart of Chinatown, they might have seen for themselves — among the stalls of exotic Asian vegetables, caged chickens, and piles of dried eels — the latest episode in the history of the Lower East Side.
V&S Taunton Galvanizing

CORROSION PROTECTION
HAS NEVER LOOKED BETTER...

Voigt & Schweitzer, the world's largest Hot Dip Galvanizing Company has now Arrived in New England

The Plant will feature our DUROZING®

A new appearance for galvanizing formulated for that "architectural look". Consisting of a selected blend of "Zinc-D3" alloys that is the toughest abrasive-resistant surface in the coatings industry today to fight corrosion.

Voigt & Schweitzer has improved their popular Duplex System (Hot Dip Galvanizing + Paint) and has brought COLORZING® to New England.

...and of course our COLORZING® system of paint over galvanizing.

V&S is no stranger to galvanizing or to the New England area. We are the proud recipients of twelve "Distinguished Awards in Galvanizing" in the last eleven years by the American Galvanizers Association, three of which are in New England.

We are ISO 9002 certified and are known not only for galvanizing, but our high quality standards and our attention to detail.

Quality Duplex System (COLORZING®), packaging, and quick just-in-time delivery like none other in the industry.

V&S offers AIA accredited Educational luncheon seminars, and is a very active supporter of different CSI chapters around the country. We look forward to working with the New England architectural community.

V&S welcomes private tours and inquiries about our company and our industry. Please feel free to contact your local V&S corrosion control specialist, V&S Taunton Galvanizing.

V&S Columbus Galvanizing LLC
Columbus, OH
(614) 443-4421 • Fax (614) 443-6375

V&S Pilot Galvanizing, Inc.
Poca, WV
(304) 755-2995 • Fax (304) 755-2999

Voigt & Schweitzer Galvanizers, Inc.
Redford, MI
(313) 535-2600 • Fax (313) 535-0862

V&S Lebanon Galvanizing LLC
Jonesboro, PA 17038
(717) 861-7777 • Fax (717) 865-7749

V&S Philadelphia Galvanizing LLC
Philadelphia, PA
(215) 739-5911 • Fax (215) 634-0791

V&S Amboy Galvanizing LLC
Perth Amboy, NJ
(732) 442-7555 • Fax (732) 442-5560

V&S Bristol Galvanizing LLC
Bristol, VA
(276) 466-5558 • Fax (276) 466-0558

Voigt & Schweitzer - 1-800-801-3648 or www.hotdipgalvanizing.com
Thoughtforms 978-263-6019 www.thoughtforms-corp.com

Named 2003's National "Custom Builder of the Year" by Custom Home Magazine
Masonry & Contemporary Architecture
Union Masonry Craftworkers & Contractors
The Best Hands in the Business

Whether its traditional hand laid masonry or innovative masonry concepts as employed on the HonnAllston Library, masonry is still the system of choice for New England area architects. No other system offers the variety of styles or materials. So whether your next project is cutting edge contemporary design or a more traditional style - Consider masonry - It will last a lifetime - Just look around.

For a successful project, 3 items are necessary:
Great design - IMI will help with any design issues.
Durable materials - The benefits of masonry materials are obvious.
Quality craftsmanship - New England is home to some of the finest masonry craftworkers and contractors in the country - Union Craftworkers and Contractors.

When designing your next project
Design with Masonry!

For information on cost effective masonry systems, call the International Masonry Institute at 1-800-IMI-0988

International Masonry Institute
2 Park Plaza, Suite 315
Boston, MA 02116
Tel: 617-338-3199
Fax: 617-426-9737
www.imiweb.org

78 Eastern Boulevard, Suite 201
Glastonbury, CT 06033
Tel: 860-659-5813
Fax: 860-659-5884
www.imiweb.org