The Art of the Long View

AIA Chicago
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Executive Director - Masonry Advisory Council

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The Art of the Long View

This exhibit showcases contributions to Chicago's landscape by local or out-of-town firms. The submission criteria were stringent: Firms were allowed to submit only a single, Chicago-area project built within the last five years or planned for within the next five.

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FOCUS

DECEMBER 1999

Cover: Lohan Associates' 300 East Randolph Street.
Photo by James Steinkamp.
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An exhibit of current work, like a photograph taken at a family reunion, captures a moment in time that exists only fleetingly. Because children will grow up and everyone’s lives will change, looking at such a picture causes one to take stock of the present and ponder the future. This exhibit, on display at the Chicago Architecture Foundation through February 2000, invites us to step back from our day-to-day experience of architecture and consider the long view of what new buildings say about us and our culture.

What realities of turn-of-the-century life are evidenced by this crop of new buildings? The awareness that resources are finite and the past is worth preserving; the need for flexibility to keep up with the rapid pace of change; the use of new materials and technology to adapt and enhance traditional forms as well as create new ones; the expectation that architecture can enhance our lives and help create meaningful places to come together.

The wiser use of resources is a hallmark of many new projects. The three “R”s of the environmentalist’s mantra — reduce, reuse, recycle — are well represented here by buildings that conserve energy and materials, by renovations and additions that permit continued use of buildings, and by adaptive reuse projects that breathe new life into obsolete structures.

The accelerating pace of change in our era is being reflected in buildings that feature flexible interior configurations. The open-plan office is now the universal standard, often accompanied by an atrium or circulation spine that provides a gathering space for the informal exchange of ideas. On the home front, the open interior has become popular as people’s lifestyles have become more casual. Renovations and additions are often the means to this end, and advances in building products make it practical.

This issue of Focus serves as a catalog to The Art of the Long View. The themes put forth here are meant to provide a framework for discussion and debate. They overlap a great deal, and most projects would fit easily in more than one category. For instance, developments in technology permit advances in "green" architecture, interactive design and complex programs. Many renovation and adaptive re-use projects serve as beacons for their neighborhoods. Most importantly, virtually all of the projects provide examples of clients’ great expectations, for despite the lack of rhetoric about architecture as an agent of social change, it is still seen as a significant contributor to the quality of everyday life.
As a sense of community becomes increasingly elusive, residents of many towns, suburbs and city neighborhoods seek to create tangible symbols of what was once taken for granted. For a struggling urban community, a new building is often a source of inspiration and hope. The Chicago projects in this exhibit help meet residents’ critical needs, whether social, medical, educational, recreational, or economic. The Lake/Pulaski Transit-Oriented Development seeks to revitalize an entire neighborhood through development of infrastructure, commerce, and a sense of place. The North Lawndale Family Resource Center and the Komed Medical Center are community focal points housing greatly needed services. The Bronzeville Military Academy brings to life an important piece of African-American history with its restoration of the 8th Regiment Armory. The Rainbow Beach Park Buildings and the Hale Park Gymnasium reinterpret historic building types for new recreational facilities.

Generally, projects in suburban areas seek to sustain rather than revitalize. The Village Green of Lincolnshire and the Schaumburg Public Library create common spaces meant to be shared by members of their communities. The Country Club Hills Municipal Center provides an indoor “Town Square” connecting its two government buildings. Optima Center Wilmette is an infill project designed to help maintain the vitality of a traditional suburban downtown by providing condominiums above ground-floor retail.

Rainbow Park Beach Buildings
7501 S. Shore Drive, Chicago
David Woodhouse Architects

North Lawndale Family Resource Center
3701 W. Ogden Ave., Chicago
Ross Barney + Jankowski Inc.
Hale Park Gymnasium
6258 W. 62nd St., Chicago
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Lake and Pulaski Streets, Chicago
Farr Associates

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3519 S. Giles Ave., Chicago
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4230 S. Greenwood Ave., Chicago
Johnson & Lee Ltd.
Country Club Hills Municipal Complex
3700 175th Place, Country Club Hills
Yas/Fischel Partnership

Village Green of Lincolnshire
Milwaukee Avenue and Route 45, Lincolnshire
Otis Koglin Wilson Associates Inc.

Schaumburg Township District Library
130 S. Roselle Road, Schaumburg
Phillips Swager Associates

Optima Center Wilmette
705 11th St., Wilmette
Optima Inc.
Great Expectations

Expectations of the built environment continue to be raised, as each successful innovation or amenity quickly sets a new standard. This is especially apparent in the fields of health, recreation and education. Hospitals are building new facilities and revamping their old ones to accommodate changes in patient care and higher expectations regarding its delivery. Local institutions such as libraries and park districts are broadening their mandates to include new visions of what they should provide. The Warren Newport Public Library is expanding its mission from book repository to information and community center with a café, shop and array of electronic resources. The Hoffman Estates Recreation Center more closely resembles an upscale health club than a traditional park fieldhouse. Orland Park high school students requested that a food court and health club replace the cafeteria and gymnasium. Projects underway at the University of Chicago include new dormitories and an athletic center designed to make the campus more inviting to students. Chicago State University is changing its status from a commuter school to a live-learn campus with a striking dormitory and student union that reflect African-American cultural themes.
Chicago State University Student Union and Student Residences
9501 S. King Drive, Chicago
Harry Weese Associates

Gerald Ratner Athletics Center at the University of Chicago
56th St. and Ellis Ave., Chicago
Cesar Pelli & Associates

Warren Newport Public Library District
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Hoffman Estates Park District Recreational Center
5050 Sedge Blvd., Hoffman Estates
Wright Architects Ltd.
Consolidated High School District 230
Orland Park
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Resource conservation is an increasingly pressing concern as the millennium draws to a close, resulting in a growing body of "green" architecture. The most striking developments are taking place on rooftops, where vegetation is replacing heat-retaining tar and asphalt on a new office building for Walgreen's and a Goose Island warehouse for TAG. A city residence has a rooftop vegetable garden and a solar collector. All of the buildings featured here seek to reduce energy consumption by harnessing the sun in various ways: replacing or supplementing artificial light with daylight and controlling solar heat gain with sunscreens and building orientation. The Tetra Pak corporate headquarters has a minimalist design that eliminates the need for many traditional finishes; it also makes use of non-toxic products, as does the headquarters for the Tuthill Corp.
Private Residence
Chicago
Landahl Design Studio P.C.

TAG
1070 N. Northbranch Ave., Chicago
Studio Gang/O'Donnell Ltd.

Tetra Pak Corporate Headquarters
101 Corporate Woods Pkwy., Vernon Hills
Solomon Cordwell Buenz & Associates Inc.
Recycled Buildings

Re-using old buildings for new purposes is a tried-and-true form of “green” architecture, saving historic resources as well as material ones. Two projects on Goose Island — Habitat 01 and Riverworks — transform abandoned industrial shells into state-of-the-art office complexes that feature the formerly malodorous Chicago River as an amenity. Three laboratory buildings on the BP Amoco campus become office buildings with the addition of a glassy atrium entry. The decommissioned army base at Fort Sheridan is master planned as an affluent suburban community where troops once drilled. Two suburban museums occupy equally unlikely quarters: the DuPage Children’s Museum in a former “big box” superstore, the Elmhurst Art Museum in a complex designed around a single family home by Mies van der Rohe.

Some facilities simply need to be updated for the same use, but in a way that goes beyond simple renovation. Such is the case with the UIC athletic facility, which creates a variety of sports facilities within the old hockey rink, and the Lincoln Park Zoo Education Center. A unique case is a proposal for Big Idea Productions’ corporate headquarters, which incorporates an old movie theater into a scheme of offices and video production facilities.
Riverworks
900 N. Northbranch Ave., Chicago
Hartshorne + Plunkard Ltd. Architects

Town of Fort Sheridan Master Plan
Highland Park
DLK Architecture Inc.

The Flames Athletic Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago
839 W. Roosevelt Road, Chicago
Mekus Studios Ltd.
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*AIA Trust Product Evaluation Study  Wiese Research Associates 1998*
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Gensler

DuPage Children's Museum
301 N. Washington St., Naperville
Peter J. Exley Architect

Elmhurst Art Museum
150 Cottage Hill Road, Elmhurst
DeStefano and Partners

Lincoln Park Zoo Education Center
Cannon Drive, Chicago
Doyle & Associates
Another Shade of Green

The mid-century mindset that newer equals better has given way to a more balanced viewpoint that creative renovations and additions to existing buildings can offer equally valid solutions. Incentives to renovate include reduced costs, increased efficiency, and restoration of significant design and craftsmanship.

The five residences presented here cover a broad range, from the rehabilitation of 1940s-era public housing in Chinatown to the restoration of a Gold Coast mansion. A Chicago bungalow is updated by adding a library and new garage that blend with the old house, while a suburban house receives a complete interior remodeling to accommodate the dynamics of a non-traditional family. The most unusual project is a pair of historic buildings in Old Town that are joined with a glass link to form a single residence. The street facades are restored to their original appearance while the interiors are gutted to provide modern amenities.

School districts face the same set of problems and constraints as many homeowners: growing numbers of children demand more space, but moving to larger quarters is not always feasible. Two city schools make maximum use of their sites with well-planned additions, and a suburban district restores a school that had been mothballed since the end of the last baby boom.

Perhaps most challenging are structures built 20 to 50 years ago that are not historic but require aesthetic and functional upgrades. Although many schools fall into this category, the examples here are from the hospitality industry and local government, proving how ubiquitous this challenge will be in the next century.
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Robert C. Vagnieres Jr. & Associates

Private Residence Library Addition
Chicago
Matthew Blaise Filipini, AIA

Archer Courts (Gates)
Archer and Princeton Avenues, Chicago
Landen Architects Ltd.
While the following residential projects evoke different periods of architectural history, almost all the interiors take their inspiration from planning concepts pioneered by Frank Lloyd Wright early in the century. Even the most traditional-looking homes feature open spaces defined by half-walls, cabinetry, columns or, even more subtly, by changes in elements such as trim, moldings or flooring. There is also a much greater emphasis on natural light, made possible in part by advances in window and skylight technology.

Clients often have very specific needs, such as single-floor living or an art collection that demands complementary display space. Multi-family housing presents the opposite extreme of an unknown group of residents whose domestic desires are being anticipated by a developer.
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The architectural changes being brought about by technology are not revolutionary but evolutionary, inexorably affecting design, use of materials, and building programs. Buildings are growing taller, and familiar materials are taking on new appearances. Advances in software are facilitating the design of 2000-foot-tall buildings which serve the needs of a new form of television technology. Tower 2000 and 7 South Dearborn are each divided into sections housing different functions, the top 500 feet of which are HDTV broadcast antennas.

Even as the city seeks to recapture the title of home of the world’s tallest building, other “firsts” are in the works. The 300 East Randolph building will receive a vertical addition on an unmatched scale, with 22 new floors slated for the top of a 32-story building. An unprecedented acoustical device features prominently in the design of IIT’s McCormick-Tribune Campus Center: a 600-foot-long stainless steel tube will enclose a section of the elevated train tracks that pass through the campus.

Other creative uses of everyday materials are in evidence at the Ha-Lo headquarters, where glass facades create fabric-like screens, and in the USG Solutions Center, where each interior wall is composed of a raw material or a material in process. Two residential projects take inspiration from their materials with very different results. The forms of one residence are fluid and complex, while the concrete block and steel structure of the other create a precise geometry.
7 South Dearborn Street
7 S. Dearborn St.
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP

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The increasingly hectic pace of change at this juncture of history has led to demands for extremely flexible spaces at home, at the office, and especially in places that combine the two. “Breaking down the box” of traditional interiors has made this flexibility easier than ever to accomplish. Two live/work spaces — a studio apartment and a 3500-square-foot loft — have completely open plans that integrate workstations for their designer-owners.

The headquarters of W.W. Grainger, Binks Sames and the American College of Surgeons all feature open office environments with workstations that can be reconfigured easily. They also include public areas that promote informal socializing and large spaces such as auditoriums that can be used for continuing education and training.

In residential architecture, the demand for flexibility extends not only to open floor plans but also to the other end of the privacy spectrum: provision for independent living quarters within a single-family home. The private residence featured here includes a ground-floor unit suitable for elderly relatives, while a similar space in the Lakeview House could also serve as a rental unit. The Convertible House is perhaps the ultimate expression of this trend, as it is planned to work equally well as a single-family house or a combination duplex and studio apartment.

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Chicago architecture has a century-old tradition of buildings with complex programs; the multi-use Auditorium Building stands as a notable example. New challenges are driven by issues as diverse as preservation, technology, transportation, criminal justice, and the changing role of the architect. The Northbridge project and the proposed Music and Dance Theater both have unusual preservation components (retaining the McGraw-Hill façade and park land respectively) and therefore need to craft inviting entrances to large public structures that are hidden from view. The Northbridge entrance at 520 N. Michigan Ave. is a gateway to a hotel and retail complex located at Grand and Rush Streets. The Randolph Street lobby of the Music and Dance Theater leads to a performance space located below the new Millennium Park.

Even more complex are specialized building types with stringent requirements: an airport terminal, a maximum security facility, and the world’s largest light source laboratory. Two design-build projects demonstrate the increasingly complex role of the architect when a firm assumes responsibility for a broader scope of work.
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Where the Interaction Is

The concept of promoting various forms of interaction — with nature, with people, or with technology — is at the heart of these projects. Children’s museums were pioneers in this domain, and the trend continues with Idea Adventures. Heightened awareness of man’s interdependence with the natural environment is the mission of the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum and the Shedd Aquarium. The Chicago Community Humane Center stresses interaction between people and pets. On the job front, Republic Windows and Doors brings together manufacturing and management in their new headquarters with a grand lobby large enough for the entire company to gather in. The Sony Metreon features four floors of interactive entertainment so exciting that the building form seems to explode out of this section. On a more day-to-day level, Oxford Bank is designed to make an array of banking technology as user-friendly as possible.
### Exhibit Openings, Lectures and Programs

#### December 1999

**Chicago Architecture: The Art of the Long View.**
- Tishman Speyer Properties, and Morse Diesel International.
- Jahn, FAIA. Runs in conjunction with AIA Chicago and the Architects Inc. Information: 312/922-3432.

**Material Evidence: Chicago Architecture at 2000**
- Investigates the use of materials as a defining element in contemporary architecture focusing on current work in Chicago. Organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) and AIA Chicago and curated by Cynthia Davidson. Information: 312/670-7770.
- Material Evidence includes Doug Garofalo, AIA, and Helmut Jahn, FAIA. It runs in conjunction with At the End of the Century: One Hundred Years of Architecture through March 5, 2000 in MCA's Turner Gallery, 220 E. Chicago Ave. Sponsored by The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, USGBC.

**At the End of the Century: One Hundred Years of Architecture.**
- An exclusive preview party for AIA Chicago members of this comprehensive survey of architectural developments and movements over the past 100 years. 5:30 to 9:00 p.m.; Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago Ave. Exhibit continues through March 5, 2000. Information: 312/670-7770.

### January 2000

**Douglas Garofalo, AIA and Randall Kober.**
- 6:00 p.m.; Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago Ave. Free with general MCA admission. Information: 312/280-2660.

**Valerio Dewalt Train Associates.**

**Frank Gehry, FAIA.**
- 6:00 p.m.; Archeworks, 625 N. Kingsbury St. Information: 312/280-2660.

### February 2000

**Cynthia Davidson.**

**Residential Architecture.**

**Young Architects.**

**The City at the End of the Century.**
- Moderator: Rem Koolhaas. 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago Ave. Information: 312/280-2660.
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Project:
181 N. Clark Street

Client:
LCOR Incorporated
Chicago

Architect:
Kohn Pedersen Fox
NYC

LaSalle Wacker Building
221 North LaSalle Street
Suite 1510
Chicago, IL 60601

312.726.0818

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Pinehurst Resort & Country Club recently completed its new clubhouse for its Centennial Course No. 8. The clubhouse, designed by architect James R. McVicker, evokes the rich tradition of Pinehurst and its position at the top of a hill makes it visible from all corners of the course. The project features over 9,000 sq. ft. of Snap-Clad panels with a Hemlock Green PAC-CLAD finish. McRae Roofing Company of Asheboro, North Carolina installed the panels.

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