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## DEPARTMENTS

- 5 Essay** Managers are from Jupiter, designers are from Saturn, by Bill Beyer
- 7 Endangered Species** Mom-and-Pop resorts, by Robert Roscoe
- 9 Sketches**
- 19 Up Close** Bob DeBruin: AIA Minnesota's 1998 president encourages architects to embrace the future to solidify their role in the building process, interview by Eric Kudalis
- 21 Insight** The pressures on planning: Political pressures and other market forces continue to erode the power of cities' planning departments, by Thomas Fisher
- 23 Editorial**
- 48 Portfolio of Cabins**
- 55 Advertising Index**
- 55 Contributors**
- 56 Lost Minnesota**

## FEATURES



**Building the River** Minneapolis's downtown river front is booming with new development—and controversy, by Todd Willmert **Page 40**



**Minnesota Green** For 40 years, the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum has been an oasis of architecture and nature, by Camille LeFevre **Page 36**



**Constructing Art** Artists and the building trade join forces in the renovation of Intermedia Arts' home, by Camille LeFevre **Page 38**



**Saratoga of the West** A book excerpt from *A Place at the Lake* traces the history of Minnesota's long-standing love affair with cabins, by Paul Clifford Larson **Page 42**

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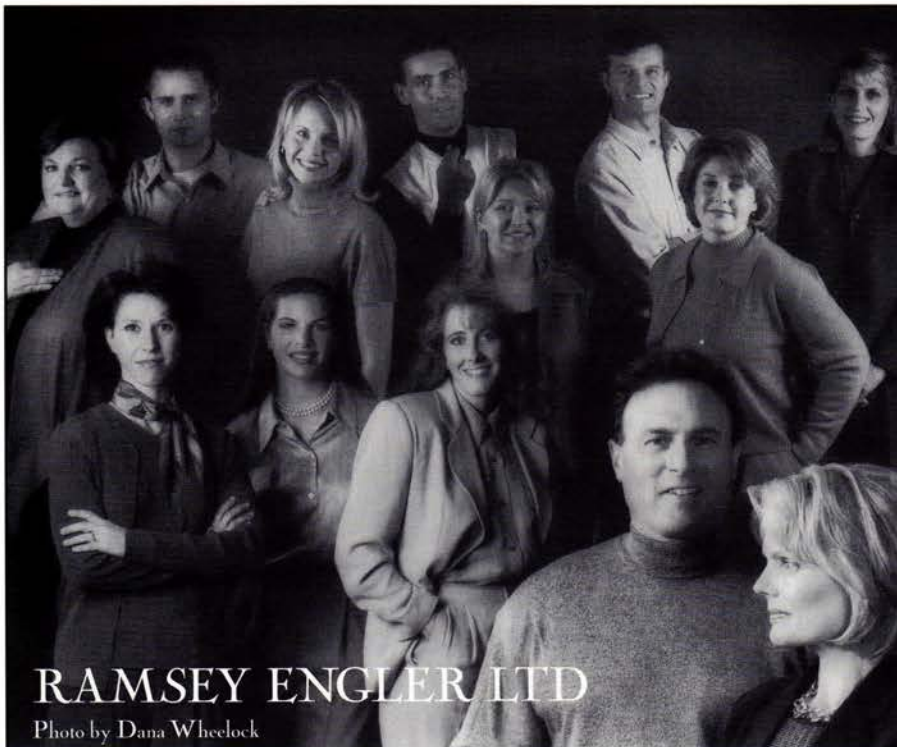
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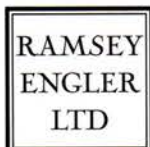
**Emerging Voices** Talent, ambition and innovation are steering the career paths of this group of architects and designers. From left to right: David Goehring, Patrick Leong, Bill Blanski, Wynne Yelland, Carolyn Krall, Paul Neseth, Aaron Parker, Cheryl Fosdick. **Page 24**





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*Architecture Minnesota* is published bimonthly by AIA Minnesota. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Board of Directors or the editorial staff of *Architecture Minnesota*. Editorial offices: International Market Square, 275 Market Street, Suite 54, Minneapolis, MN 55405. (612) 338-6763. FAX: (612) 338-7981. E-Mail: AIAminoff@aol.com. Web Address: WWW.AIA-MN.org. Note to subscribers: When changing address, please send address label from recent issue and your new address. Allow six weeks for change of address. Subscription rate: \$18 for one year, \$3.50 for single issue. Postmaster: Send address change to *Architecture Minnesota* at above address. Periodical postage paid at Minneapolis, and additional mailing offices. Advertising and Circulation: *Architecture Minnesota*, above address and phone. Printing: St. Croix Press. Color Separations: Spectrum, Inc. Copyright 1998 by *Architecture Minnesota* (ISSN 0149-9106).

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# Managers are from Jupiter, designers are from Saturn

By Bill Beyer

I was recently perusing *P.M.* (Project Management, I assume), one of those new trade magazines that seem to pop up every few weeks. Editor Jim Treadway's opening editorial caught my attention, in part because of its condescending tone. "Project Management in the A/E/C industry is at a crossroads," he writes. "The market has already begun to rely more on project managers with business and logistics capabilities rather than on those with mere design and technical skills."

Mere design. Mere technical skills. It's unsettling to be "mere-ed." Treadway went on to call for a "more business-oriented view of this profession." Unfortunately, business erosion of professional responsibilities is part of a long trend of ignoring or discounting the core ethic of professionalism—trust—in favor of the dominant ethic of business management—profit.

When architects let their construction-phase service abilities wither and rot, construction managers sprung up like mushrooms. They're here to stay. The trend in the business world is the advanced management degree. We

*Increasingly, architects must combine project management skills with design skills*

have our own "hot" new Carlson School of Management building at the University of Minnesota. Its graduates jump into the business world and start making money—more than double, on average, what a graduate architect can expect after a longer education and accredited professional degree, with a three-year internship still ahead. Perhaps if our society valued the quality of its built environment as much as the size of its bottom line we could achieve better bal-

ance. But even the green building movement has been recently repackaged so that "green" is as much the color of cash as the color of a sustainable world.

So what's the difference between management and design? Both terms are so general and broadly used to have accrued multiple, overlapping meanings. According to the dictionary, to manage is to arrange, contrive, guide, conduct, regulate, engineer. The root sense is to handle or train, as in a horse or a human being. Design is to plan, organize, to arrange artistically or skillfully, to conceive or contrive. Managers deal with arrangements of people, processes and money, mostly tangible. Designers deal with sensual arrangements of space and materials, creating qualities of beauty and place essential to well-being and productivity, more intangible.

The best book about design I've ever read is Ralph Caplan's *By Design (Why there are no bathroom doors in the Hotel Louis XIV and other object lessons)*. Its pivotal chapter is entitled, "The Design of Possibilities," and discusses the application of design to situations as well as objects (and answers the why in the book's title). The metaphorical use of the word architect as a designer of situations is age-old and still popular. Look in any daily newspaper for the "architects" of foreign policies or corporate mergers. Caplan notes that, "Gandhi, a master architect, pioneered getting arrested as a strategic device." He ends the chapter by declaring that "The same process that shapes our useful objects—cameras, buildings, furniture, bicycles, knives and forks—can be a tool for shaping how we live with them and with each other." Caplan defined design simply as the process of making things right. If architects embrace the breadth and richness of that definition in teaching and practicing the discipline of design, applying it to schedules, costs and benefits, and to management of people and situations, we will provide better value to society.

To be a successful designer, you can limit yourself to the purely spatial and sensual. But long ago in architecture school the conventional wisdom was that the "A" students (pure design stars) would end up working for the "C" students, who often had better overall balance in understanding the many facets of the profession. Ironically, an unbalanced value of design in school may have led to a discounted value in the real world.

To be an architect, you must master both design and management skills, balancing all aspects artfully, and economically arranging people, time, money, space, materials and resources to create beautiful and durable places. Design is a large part of what we do; management must be an increasingly important part. The two powerful disciplines can inform each other.

Jupiter is the largest of planets; Saturn the most beautiful. Is there hope for better understanding and collaboration between planetary neighbors, management and design? I can imagine their initial conversation:

*Jupiter: By the way, what is the actual function of those rings?*

*Saturn: Mere beauty. Its own excuse for being, I believe.*

*Jupiter: Curves are expensive. Would you consider a value-engineering suggestion?*

*Saturn: Only if you lose that angry red spot. I could design an attractive veneer.*

The dialogue has to start somewhere.





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## Mom and Pop Resorts

### Northern Minnesota

By Robert Roscoe

Cabin number eight. You'll always remember it. Every summer of your youth, on the first day of that specific week, Dad drove the station wagon past the resort office, parked it alongside "your" cabin, and every family member jumped out and brought the week's supply of clothes, fishing gear and groceries into the cabin's spare but homey interior. Then you ran outside to see if the chipmunks that lived under your cabin the last few summers were still around. A few minutes later, the resort owner's wife cheerfully chatted with you about your school year and your clarinet lessons as she filled your minnow bucket with 16 or 17 silvery squirmers for the dozen you asked for.

An hour later the husband-wife co-owners came by to meet everyone again and talk about family events that happened in the past year. As they headed back to the office, one of the owners casually mentioned that your parents should stop by the office the next day to "register."

In a generation or two, most Minnesotans will have different memories of the summer northern-Minnesota vacation. The mom-and-pop cabin resorts that were once far more numerous than the state's 10,000 lakes will be replaced by large-scale resorts that are mini-suburbs of densely packed time-share condos and large, expansive recreation buildings that line



Woman Lake Lodge, Cass County.

up along strips of asphalt parking lots. The mom-and-pop places, we are told, lack the "amenities" the new resort complexes offer, such as golf courses, playgrounds, day-care services, full-service restaurants and the swimming pool located 100 feet from the lake. Northern Minnesota itself used to be amenity enough.

Several northern-Minnesota counties report that in the last quarter century 40 percent of the small resorts of the mom-and-pop variety have disappeared. The reasons given are simple: the value of lakeshore land underneath these cabins makes it more enticing to go big and believe in the new American mantra, "If you build it, they will come." Marcie Swenson, an employee at the Woman Lake Lodge in Cass County, used to own an eight-cabin resort but gave it up several years ago when taxes, insurance and other fixed costs, not to mention the long summer hours that contrasted with the isolation of the rest of the year, made the venture unworkable. She said of her experience, "You really couldn't earn a living at it without one of the partners working a separate full-time job. It used to be that the whole family pitched in." Another reason for the decline of small resorts, Swenson says, is that today's travel business can take vacationers to exotic places all over the world. "It used to be that northern Minnesota was exotic enough," she commented, "but not anymore."

What do owners Jeff, Patty and Matt Burks of the Woman Lake Lodge have that makes their 20-cabin operation work? "Personality," Swenson says. "They are outgoing people; they remember their guests. That is the draw that makes people want to come here."

The North Woods vacation has been part of the Minnesota economy and popular culture for more than a century. Railroads that came to northern Minnesota in the 1870s soon brought development of hotels and resorts to lakes near railroad tracks. In the early 1880s, entrepreneur J.K. West came to the Detroit Lakes region and built a canal system serviced with a series of locks and dams that linked the Pelican River with five lakes. From 1889 to 1919 the Pelican Valley Navigation Company operated steamboats to bring passengers to various destinations in the area.

In the 1920s, construction of highways and increased use of the automobile brought once-remote rural areas within reach of the majority of people, resulting in the growth of cabin resorts. Fishing became a popular sport as well as a family activity. Cabins were built with simple construction methods. Some cabins utilized the rural tradition of log construction: wood-framed floors supported a bit above ground by a series of concrete blocks. Over the years, 2-by-4 framing that formed walls and roofs became the

*Continued on page 46*



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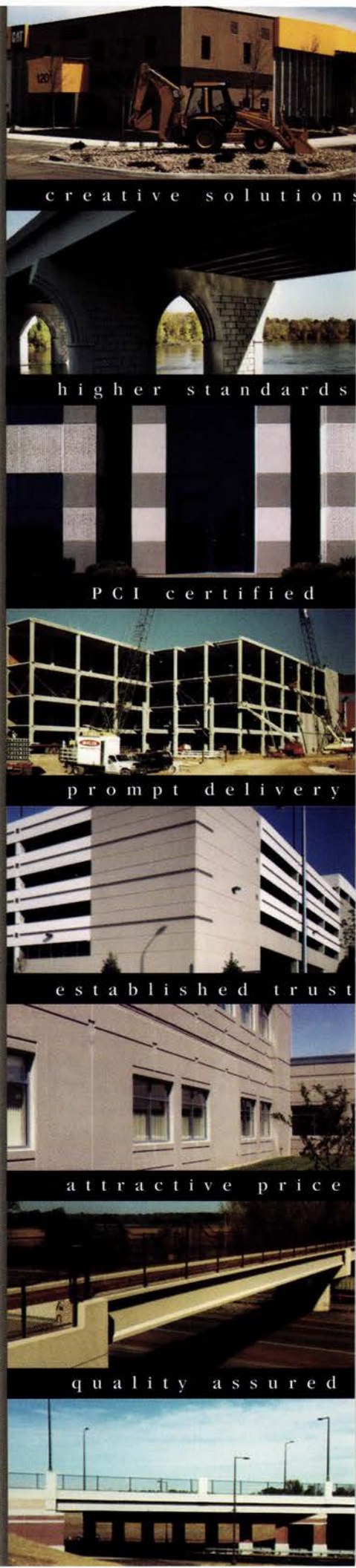
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## Adding to CALA

**W**ITH FUNDING IN PLACE, The College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture at the University of Minnesota is set to begin construction on an expansion, designed by Steven Holl Architects of New York. The \$26.4 million budget, approximately one-half of what was originally proposed nearly 10 years ago, means a smaller addition that has sent Holl back to the drawing board to rework a design that won him and then co-designer Ellerbe Becket a P/A Award in 1990.

In response, Holl has introduced an entirely new scheme for a 45,000-square-foot addition.

The original proposal featured a circular plan that rose two stories above the existing architecture building, a modernist brick box built in 1960 by Thorshov and Cerny. Holl's new design replaces the doughnut-shaped configuration of the first proposal with a curving 3-story cruciform plan to house a library, auditorium, lobby, studios and classrooms, and research and administrative offices. The ends of each masonry-clad wing will feature a translucent wall with smaller transparent windows, creating a visual connection between inside and outside. In addition, a series of seasonal gardens between the quadrants will enhance campus landscaping. Proposals call for a western entry garden, northern ice garden, eastern experimental garden, and southern reflective garden.

The budget includes upgrading mechanical and electrical systems in the existing facility, with some interior revamping. Once completed, the College will unite its diverse programs and departments under one roof, including the renowned Design Center for the American Urban Landscape.

Groundbreaking is scheduled for June 1999, with completion in January 2001. Vince James Associates, Inc., of Minneapolis is the associate architect, with Ellerbe Becket of Minneapolis as engineer and landscape architect.

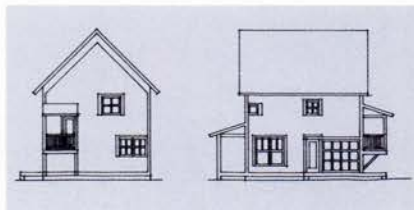


The CALA addition, by Steven Holl, will feature four gardens within its cruciform plan.

## New town

**I**N ONE OF THE MOST AMBITIOUS DEVELOPMENTS espousing the tenets of New Urbanism in Minnesota, the development team of Harold Teasdale and Bob Durfey has unveiled plans for Jackson Meadow, a 64-house community on a 145-acre site in Marine-on-St. Croix. The development, reflecting Marine-on-St. Croix's historic architectural character and pastoral quality along the St. Croix River Valley, will feature a series of neighborhoods connected by a "loop" road and pedestrian corridors surrounding a public "commons." With its emphasis on the pedestrian and not the car, the community will be a throwback to an earlier era of residential design with its assortment of relatively small houses with picket fences, front porches and detached garages. "We are taking old ideas to create a place that is exciting to live in," says David Salmela, architect of the development. In addition

to Salmela, the design/development team includes Coen + Stumpf + Associates, responsible for landscape design and master planning. Groundbreaking is expected to begin on the first houses this summer.



David Salmela of Duluth is designing Jackson Meadow's houses.

## Artful business



**S**USPENDED FROM CABLES In the atrium of the new Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota, Ed Carpenter's luminous sphere symbolizes the global interconnection and collaborative spirit of the business school. The Portland, Ore., artist rendered the sculpture in cold bent tempered plate and dichroic glass, aluminum, copper, stainless steel and computerized lighting.

## Calendar

**Summer Design Series**  
Walker Art Center  
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Guest speakers include Samuel Mockbee on July 21; Diana Balmori on July 28; David Salmela and Vincent James on Aug. 4. For more information, call (612) 338-6763.

**Shana Kaplow:**  
New Work  
Thomas Barry fine arts  
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Through Aug. 1

The gallery's final exhibition for the 1997-1998 season features the paintings and drawings of this St. Paul artist. For more information, call (612) 338-3656.

**New York, New York:**  
Photographs of the City  
Minneapolis Institute  
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One-hundred photographs from MIA's permanent collection will show New York in its many moods. Featured are pieces by Alfred Stieglitz, Jerome Liebling and others. For more information, call (612) 870-3000.

**Women in the Weisman Collection:**  
The Spirit of Seneca Falls  
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Through Aug. 30

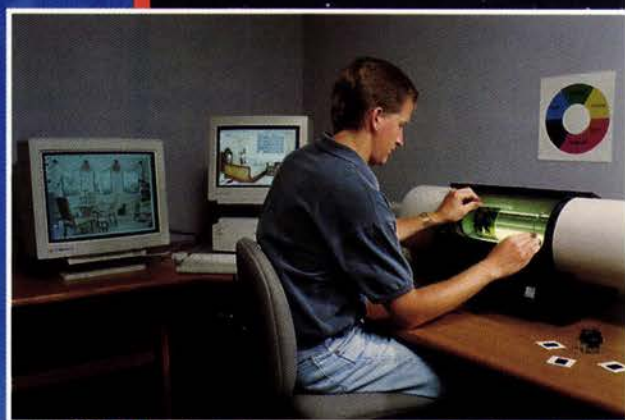
Artwork produced by 60 women artists, nearly half from Minnesota, is on display. For more information call (612) 625-9494.

**Art Performs Life:** Merce Cunningham/Meredith Monk/Bill T. Jones  
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## Hot off the presses

Review by Dale Mulfinger

"THERE'S SOMETHING DEEPLY COMFORTING about a cottage by the water. It's the place where you can really get away from it all, where you can unwind with a good book, canoe across the lake shimmering in the sunset or just hunker down on the porch to listen to the murmur of the evening zephyrs. Whether by the surging sea, a tranquil lake or a babbling brook, the waterside cottage is truly the quintessential retreat."

So begins Jim Tolpin's recently published *The New Cottage Home: A Tour of Unique American Dwellings*, a charming account of modest structures created in the past decade across North America. A similar entry could have opened Paul Clifford Larson's *A Place at the Lake*, in which he hearkens back a century to Minnesota's legacy as a world of summer retreats at the lake.

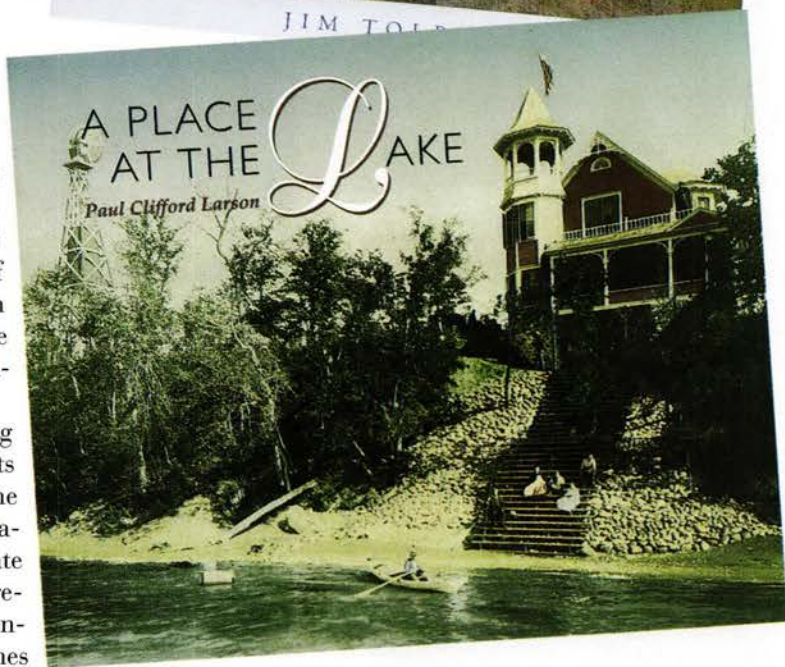
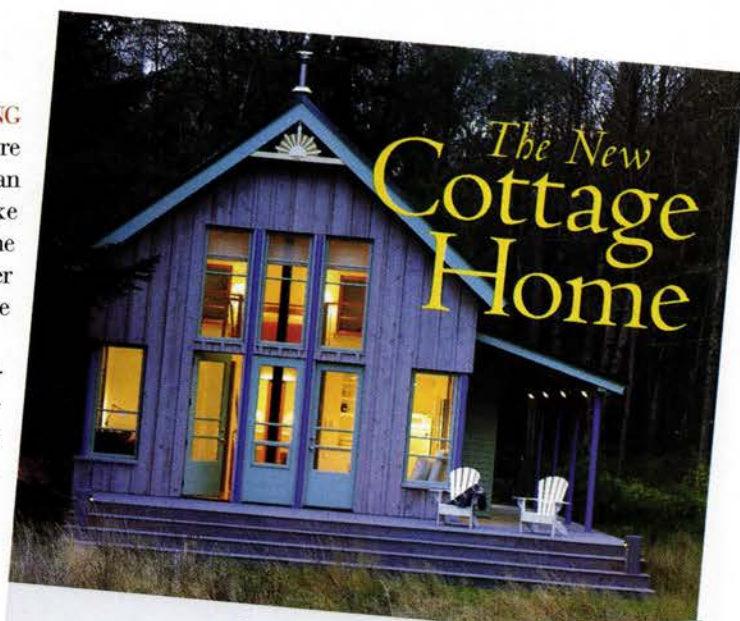
Tolpin illustrates homes where wood, light, color and views are assembled in casual flexible plans. Regional themes embrace simple structures as 28 cottages are chronicled for their particular interpretation of cottage architecture. Whether built as timber-frame, earth-sheltered or simple stick structures, these cottages demonstrate how contemporary architects can design modest dwellings in tranquil settings. Each home is embellished with rich detail adding character and spatial variety (my favorite is the window seat in the Forest Cottage of Naples, Maine). The book is beautifully illustrated with watercolor sketches by Mike Kowalski. Unfortunately, the plans are less rigorously rendered with several errors of interpretation, and delineated at a variety of scales.

Larson's *A Place at the Lake* (see excerpt beginning on page 42) is a rich documentation of our investments on the shores of Minnesota's 10,000 lakes at a time when retreating was principally a summer preoccupation. Modest cottages are interspersed with the elaborate summer homes of the rich. Organized by geographic regions of Minnesota, the book reads as if a travelogue enjoyed in a Model T Ford ambling along country lanes and remote shorelines.

It's a shame to know that we've destroyed so many of these structures, such as Frank Lloyd Wright's Francis B. Little house on Lake Minnetonka. But the romantic Glooskap guest house remains, although now a full-time residence surrounded by a subdivision. Beautifully preserved is the Noyes cottage on White Bear Lake, an arts-and-crafts gem.

Designer Lois Stanfield has created a beautiful context for Larson's scholarly text. Using digital-imaging software, she has brought black-and-white historical photos alive in rich sepia tones.

My interest in these books is hardly passive, as I too have been on the trail of quintessential Minnesota and Wisconsin cabins. I fear we are tossing cabins aside for an investment in lake homes with attached three-car garages. Last summer, aided by a dozen architecture students, I went hunting for endear-



ing cabins new and old. I was particularly interested in the cabins that were precious enough that they had repelled the force of modernization. We opened 100 files, and in the coming years I hope to embellish those files and share them with the public in a book. As an architect, I find that researching cabins aids my designs of both homes and cabins. A place at the lake can be much more than a room attached to a picture window. As Larson has recorded, history demonstrates this well. Tolpin reminds us that history can be reinterpreted into contemporary cottages of charm.

Published by Afton Historical Society Press in Afton, Minn., *A Place at the Lake* is a companion piece to Larson's previously published *Icy Pleasures: Minnesota Celebrates Winter*. *The New Cottage Home* is published by The Tauton Press in Newton, Conn.





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## Prevention.





# Cabin lore

Defining the almost mythic allure of a cabin gets to the heart of being at one with nature

By Medora Woods

**W**hat are we really looking for as we head for “the cabin”? The cabin is more than a dwelling that is primitive, rustic or luxurious. It is a state of mind and body. Certainly, it includes memory and anticipation of solitude, ease, moments with family and friend, spacious water-sparkled summer days and rainy afternoons, the pleasures of water, wind, sky and woods.

Beyond these familiar associations, however, lies physical and psychic territory less accessible, less easily articulated. As urbanized (or suburbanized) creatures, we spend most of our lives living with artifice, with layers of manufactured material between us and the elements, between us and the rhythm of the days and nights and seasons, between us and our fellow creatures, between us and the land. Held in cocoons of material, fed by a vast food-distribution system, engaged with activities of the mind, we mostly forget that we are also animals. But, something in us doesn't forget. A dim yearning finds expression in gardening, bird watching, outdoor sports and indoor plants, caring for pets and going to “the cabin.”

The cabin is our passport to another realm in which that yearning comes closer to the surface as we forget our watches and schedules, spend our days outside, simplify our lives, and touch a small measure of our former selves. We forget that this highly urbanized and mechanized human lifestyle is a tiny instant in the millennia of human history. The human body and soul were not designed for freeways, computers, skyscrapers and jet planes. Whatever the pleasures and advantages of such a lifestyle, it has the unavoidable effect of disconnecting us from each other, our essential natures, and the land. We forget that our physical and psychic inheritance belongs to life once lived in small communities, so in tune with the rhythms of nature.

This disconnection we experience causes that dim yearning, our longing for reconnection to community and to nature. This disconnection also causes us to behave, as a culture, in ways that are tremendously destructive of the earth. In our technological isolation, we have forgotten our dependence on the earth for every element of our lives.

In the summer of 1997, following that yearning in myself, I bought four-and-a-half acres of woods, with a small 50-year-old summer cabin, on the North Shore of Lake Superior. The deed filed with Cook County says I own this property, but I can never “own” the ancient rock in front of the cabin that slants gently down to the water, and with the lichen and tiny flowers jutting bravely from the cracks. Sitting at the edge of rock and

water, I feel in touch with something infinitely ancient and more than human in the world and in myself. With this sense of what was reaching my body and soul, I began, with my architect friend Sarah Nettleton, the project of renovating the cabin and engaging a sustainable-design process.

From the beginning, we understood ourselves to be in a transformative learning process, an exploration of connection in a disconnected world. In a world in which each aspect of design and construction is an act isolated from the larger human and ecological communities, we began looking at the connections. Our project goal states that we are concerned about consequences to the natural environment, the human and nonhuman neighbors and larger community, as well as the communities that supply the building materials and receive subsequent construction and manufacturing waste.

Having defined the project as a sustainable-design project, we are continually discovering what that term means. There is no sustainable-design manual with lists of available products and technologies. Every question leads to a dozen more. There is ongoing tension between having a grand idea and making it practical, between wanting to be responsible for the impact of the project on the present and future communities and recognizing that this project is occurring in a context of disconnection, and thus incurring some damage either inevitable or virtually impossible to mitigate.

We have entered into a collaborative process, one in which owner, architect, contractor, consultants, subs and suppliers have much to contribute and much to learn. The product will be a cabin only in the narrowest sense, for the process is teaching each of us and will have a ripple effect as we find our work affected by what we learn. The process is guided by the sense in each of us of what it means to grope towards connection with and responsibility to the greater community and the natural world, our sense of being part of the web of life.

For me, there is an evolving understanding of what it will mean to be consciously aware of each element of the cabin when it's completed, and the joy of knowing all the ways in which this cabin and the process of creating it have embodied a sense of connection to something larger than myself.



Cabin, designed by Sarah Nettleton ARCHITECTS.

AARON MILLER



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# Catherine Brown

REMEMBERED

**W**ITH THE PASSING OF CATHERINE BROWN ON APRIL 12, the design community lost one of its most dedicated and talented landscape architects, and Minneapolis one of its most civic-minded and civil community leaders. Catherine provided a form of civic leadership—what she referred to as civic gardening—that was rooted in qualities of creative intelligence, integrity, graciousness and respect. Her values and her heart were engaged directly in her public work, an interrelated unity.

Three scenes remain illustrative of her dedication to the community as a senior fellow and director of special projects at the Design Center for the American Urban Landscape at the University of Minnesota.

**THE FIRST** is an image of Catherine leading a heated community meeting about how to move forward with the reconfiguration of the Sumner-Olson housing site in north Minneapolis.

The Public Housing Authority, under a court mandate to reduce concentrations of poverty at the site, hired Catherine to explore opportunities for alternative uses of the property. After hundreds of hours of analysis and public process, the project was still a political minefield. New constituencies and complications arose by the day. But Catherine stayed a constant course.

She and her team at the Design Center had taken the site apart layer by layer in order to reconstruct it. She had created a large four-by-four-foot model with interchangeable parts. It worked like a giant jigsaw puzzle. By removing pieces, you could see the underlying soil conditions and understand the limitations they imposed. By substituting new pieces for the old, you could explore endless configurations of uses.

Through this ostensibly simple act, Catherine did a very complicated thing. She prodded us to forget, at the proper moment, what we thought we knew. She enabled us to see new possibilities in the familiar. She helped us understand how we can make the leap from the narrow circumstance to general principles about how to strengthen neighborhoods and build community.

**THE SECOND IMAGE** is of sitting with Catherine in a City Hall conference room with eleven public-works engineers. The meeting had been called to discuss a proposed overpass at the intersection of Hiawatha Avenue and Lake Street. Mayor Fraser had vetoed the proposal a number of times in favor of a solution less hostile to pedestrians. The meeting was intended to convince the mayor's office that we should throw in the towel. Catherine agreed to join us and provide some advice.

For the first 45 minutes, each of the engineers took his turn explaining why the overpass was necessary. Catherine listened intently, nodding with each mind-numbing explanation of traffic counts, acceptable delay thresholds and the like. When the engineers were finished, she asked if she might pose a few clarifying questions.

Clarifying indeed. Dismantling was more like it. She had mentally organized the presentation into a handful of basic assumptions, each of which she proceeded to turn on its head. She finished by tapping lightly with her pencil on one of the working drawings. "I haven't seen these drawings before and I'm a landscape architect not an engineer," she said. "But I think you'll find that you've given yourselves far more

ramp length than you need. If you shorten it to here"—tapping again—"you'll meet all the requirements you just described and eliminate the need to condemn the properties on the corner. The entire project changes in that event, does it not?" She smiled and put her pencil down.

The lead engineer flushed. His drawings and analyses had been gospel for months. But Catherine was right and he knew it. They would get back to us, he said. They didn't.

That kind of integrity was consummate Catherine. The situation was in many respects futile. But she had come to the view that the City was set on a course that was unnecessary, ill-considered and destructive. She was not about to be cowed by uninspired thinking masquerading as professional best practices. She wasn't confrontational or argumentative. Just clear.

**THE THIRD OF MY IMAGES** is of watching Catherine stand in front of the Hennepin County Board to make the case for the preservation of the Minneapolis Armory.

When the Armory issue first arose, Bill Morrish and Catherine had introduced themselves to me and offered to help the mayor's office in its efforts to reuse the structure. Little did I suspect what that modest offer of help would mean. With Catherine doing much of the heavy lifting, the Design Center assembled a team of consultants to develop a comprehensive reuse proposal, retained the nation's leading expert on jail design to prod the County into rethinking its approach and made themselves available in countless other ways.

By the time Catherine made her appearance before the County Commissioners, the issue was, to put it mildly, charged—it was not John Derus, Sam Sivanich and Jeff Spartz at the height of their policy-making skills. Catherine was unfazed. She walked them through the arguments and the ensuing questioning with impeccable self-control and good grace.

Catherine didn't convince the Board to change its course. But she did establish in those few minutes a tenor of reasoned, civil disagreement that had eluded us to that point. She laid the foundation for the time—and it did arrive—when the politics of belligerence could yield to the politics of sensible compromise.

Catherine's passing is too important to absorb all at once. Our community would be well-served by reflecting carefully on the qualities of civic leadership she embodied. Our public work needs people with the kind of integrity, refinement and quiet dignity that Catherine offered. It needs people who are committed, as Catherine was, to elevating our collective intellectual effort. And it needs people like Catherine who can capture our imagination.

Thank you, Catherine. You have indeed left our city a better place than you found it.



By Rip Rapson



# WHEN IT CAME TO RENOVATING THIS HISTORIC COURTHOUSE, EVEN THE

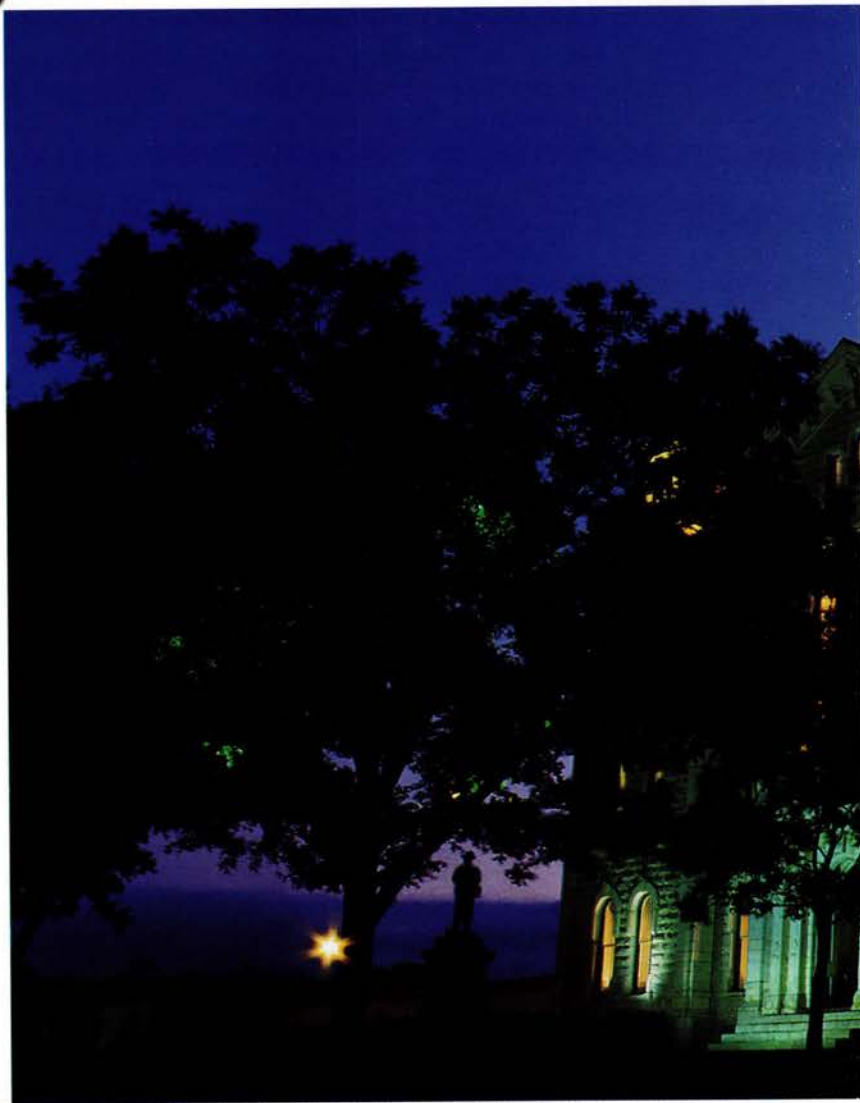
In 1964, The Parker County Courthouse in Weatherford, Texas was designated a Texas Historic Landmark. And thus began the slow, methodical process of restoring it. First to receive attention was the structure's limestone stonework. Later, the roof was replaced. Then came the windows, which proved to be one of the most challenging aspects of the project.

The Historical Survey Committee mandates that if nothing remains of a historic building's original windows, the new ones must be faithful reproductions, right down to the last detail. Since the courthouse's original wood windows had been replaced by aluminum ones some years back, that meant that all 105 of the new windows had to be virtually identical to those made and installed over a century ago.

Bids were sought, but only two manufacturers felt qualified to respond. One of them, Marvin Windows & Doors, had actually been recommended by a company that was asked to bid but declined.

Though underbid by the other finalist, Marvin's figures were based on building the largest windows with structural muntin bars to withstand the winds that buffeted the building's hilltop site. Intrigued, the architect asked each company to build a sample window. One look at the prototypes and the job was immediately awarded to Marvin.

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of the courthouse and measurements of the actual openings, they designed the round tops, double hungs, circles and checkrail units that play such an integral role in the building's design. As for the largest of them, not only were they built to withstand the high wind requirements, Marvin delivered them factory-mulled to further simplify installation.

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## Bob DeBruin

AIA Minnesota's 1998 president encourages architects to embrace the future to solidify their role in the building process

**B**ob DeBruin, 1998 AIA Minnesota president, has been with Ellerbe Becket for 25 years. He is a member of the firm's management committee, with responsibility for Ellerbe Becket's developer-market segment, as well as leading a team that focuses on higher-education work. Among DeBruin's most visible downtown-Minneapolis projects are the new Target Headquarters, under construction

on Nicollet Mall, for which he is a principal-in-charge, and the LaSalle Plaza complex, where he was project director. *Architecture Minnesota* recently talked with DeBruin about his goals for AIA Minnesota and issues affecting the architectural profession. The following is an excerpt from that conversation.

### What inspired you to become an architect?

A friend, somewhat of a surrogate father, inspired me. We played in a drum-and-bugle corps together when I was in my mid-teens in Appleton, Wis. He was a student in the architecture program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He took a real interest in me, and became somewhat of a mentor. In between drumming instructions, he talked a lot about architecture. I eventually decided to attend the University of Detroit in the late-1960s. The school was in the heart of Detroit, which was quite a learning experience from a racial/cultural perspective. It was an experience quite different from what I was exposed to growing up. After college, I

worked for two years for a former professor in Detroit. He was doing inner-city apartment renovations after the 1967 riots as a part of the federal government's Operation Breakthrough Program. Although my wife and I enjoyed living in an urban environment, there was always the potential for trouble and Detroit didn't seem like an ideal place to raise a family. When Mary was pregnant with our first child, we began looking for other urban options and eventually decided to move to Minneapolis in the early 1970s.

### What is an architect's public role? How can an architect improve the public domain?

Architects should be a lot more involved in housing, but I think that for this to happen takes somewhat better development on the local and national level. Programs need to be put in place that promote sound planning and strategies for development. To be successful, the urban environment needs a varied housing stock to meet the needs of a diverse population. Frankly, that's an area in which Minneapolis has been successful, in that it has maintained a wide selection of middle-income housing throughout the city. From a broader perspective, I think architects need to get more involved in planning, and to look at such issues as urban planning, urban sprawl and the long-term impacts. If you go out to the suburbs on the weekend, it's often more difficult to drive around than in the city. Architects

also need to observe and comment on the broader implications of design outside of just individual projects; yet, the business of architecture is getting more and more demanding in terms of time, so this makes it very difficult.

### What are your goals for AIA Minnesota?

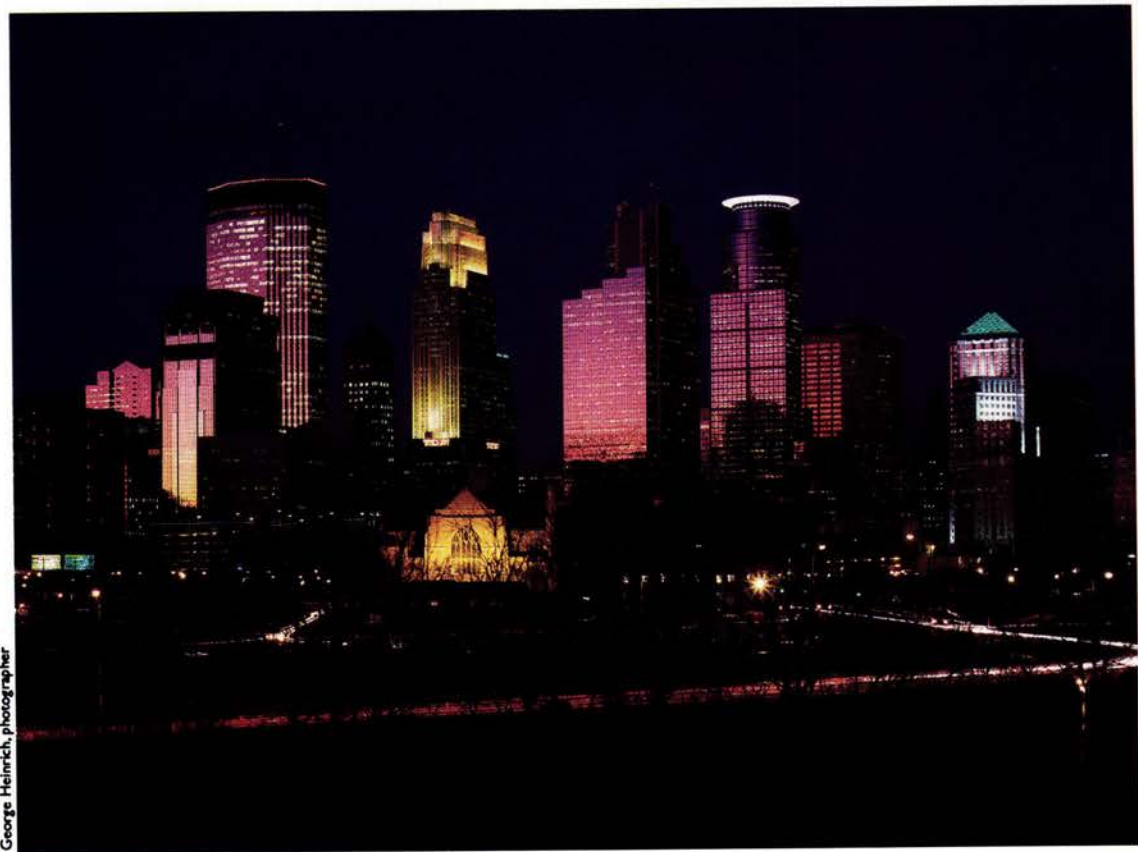
I want to get more active with the legislature to make sure that some of the key issues affecting the urban environment and the architectural profession are being addressed. The political agenda is important because there are a lot of changes for the profession on the horizon. Only if we embrace those changes will the profession remain viable. We need to continue to be leaders and have dialogue on such issues as design-build legislation, registration law, zoning regulations, etc. Architects need to be involved in crafting the profession's future rather than just letting it happen to us.

### Should architects become more politically involved in such areas as state legislature, city council and county government, either as elected officials or as lobbyists?

While I think it's a healthy thing to have architects in elected office, many times you can have a greater impact on a more immediate, local level. Attaining such broader political positions as state legislator or city-council person is extremely time-consuming. The whole process of getting elected is a full-time job and politics is a career track in itself. An architect pursuing political office must focus on the politics rather than design or architecture. Consequently, I

*Continued on page 46*





George Heinrich, photographer

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# The pressures on planning

*Political pressure and other market forces continue to erode the power of cities' planning departments*

By Thomas Fisher

**T**hese are tough times for planning, and that should concern us all, design professionals and the public alike. Consider the fate of planners in the Twin Cities: St. Paul substantially reduced the size of its planning department a few years back and Minneapolis has not renewed the contract of its planning director, Paul Farmer, purportedly because he did not pay enough attention to certain council members and the concerns of their neighborhoods. Nor are planners in the Twin Cities alone in such treatment. Once strong planning departments, such as New York City's, have nowhere near the clout they once had, while the laissez-faire planning of places like Houston continues to draw adherents.

The daily tasks of planning continue to get done here as elsewhere: devising zoning codes and policies, developing land use and transportation plans, directing physical and economic growth, and so on. However, some of those tasks have shifted to the private sector. While architects debate the aesthetics or relevance of New Urbanism, for example, they sometimes overlook that fact that this movement has represented in many places a shift in responsibility for planning to private developers, whose designers now en-

vision whole towns rather than just parts of it. At the same time, other tasks of planning now occur at the local level, as with Minneapolis's Neighborhood Revitalization Program, where each neighborhood establishes its own priorities, almost to the exclusion of a vision for the city as a whole.

Meanwhile, the authority and independence of planners continue to erode. The ability of planners to resist market forces and local political pressures accounts for most of our past planning successes, from the Boundary Waters Canoe Area to Minneapolis's Chain of Lakes, from the Capitol district to the skyway system. Likewise, some of our greatest failures—highways tearing through neighborhoods, public housing segregating the poor, the clearance of older downtown districts—occurred when planners buckled under intense pressure after the Second World War to keep our economy at a wartime pitch, even if that meant engaging in our own version of the blitzkrieg called urban renewal.

If planning helps us see past our self-interests to a greater good, why the apparent aversion to it? Our political culture holds at least a partial answer. Over the last few decades, both the political left and right have at-

tacked planning for very different reasons. Since the 1960s, the left has often viewed planning as a tool of those in power, a means of maintaining a repressive social order. While that view has had some benefit—sensitizing planners to the needs of the powerless, for instance—it has taken its toll on the confidence and expansiveness of planners. Many planning documents now focus so intently on local conditions and small-scale interventions that they fail to give us what few others can—a sense of the whole.

Likewise, since the Reagan era, the political right has seen planning in a different light—as something akin to socialism, a drag on free markets. That, too, has brought some needed change. Most planners now have given up on old forms of command and control, and have learned to act in less bureaucratic and more entrepreneurial ways, combining private-sector management ideas with their public responsibilities. Nevertheless, the criticism of the political right has led some planners to take a pseudo-scientific stance that is content with analysis rather than synthesis—to describe problems rather than designing solutions to them.

*Continued on page 50*





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– Loren Ahles, AIA, Project Designer

– Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, Inc., Minneapolis

Photography: Tom Hlavaty



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– John Gould, AIA, Director of Design

– KKE Architects, Inc., Minneapolis

Photography: Lea Babcock



**Bailey Elementary School  
– South Washington  
County Schools, ISD 833,  
Dan Hoke, Superintendent**

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Minnesota's architectural landscape is plotted by a progression of architects, with each successive generation building upon the last. Emerging firms are part of a continuum of change. The architectural profession, as with any profession, is ever changing, and the most successful firms and individuals are those that adapt to, as well as propel, change.

As Bob DeBruin, 1998 AIA Minnesota president states in "Up Close" (page 19), architecture's "biggest challenge is preparing for the future while still surviving today. We all need to connect with the changes that are occurring."

## EMERGING VOICES

Part of that change, according to DeBruin, is assessing the architect's role in the building process, a process that becomes more complex as building technology continues to expand. "We are currently engaged in redefining the architects' role in the entire building process," DeBruin continues. "Some people shrink from this redefinition, others embrace it."

Successful architects who emerge as professional leaders perform a balancing act each day. Architects must proportion strong design skills with business savvy. As Bill Beyer states in his essay (page 5), "To be an architect, you must master both design and management skills, balancing all aspects artfully, and economically arranging people, time, money, space, materials and resources to create beautiful and durable places. Design is a large part of what we [as architects] do; management must be an increasingly important part. The two powerful disciplines can inform each other."

Combining design with marketing and management acumen informs many of the emerging voices featured in this issue. Patrick Leong, who oversees Shea Architects' new media division, Cybertects.SHEA, represents a rising wave of young designers who are applying their architecture-school background in innovative ways. "It's all about how you distinguish your product from others," Leong says.

The individuals featured in this issue (pages 24-35) represent a sampling of Minnesota's many emerging architectural and design voices. Some of the individuals are less than 10 years out of architecture school, others have been around a little longer. They all are pushing boundaries by building new firms or assuming leadership positions within larger firms.

Their design philosophy drives their work. "Both making and appreciating architecture is substantially a process of seeing relationships and recording them through the built form," says Cheryl Fosdick. For David Goehring, being an architect is a privilege granted by the client. "The owner has a vision," Goehring says, "and they are paying for our rights to be architects." According to Bill Blanski of Hammel Green and Abrahamson, architecture is a collaborative process that melds many voices. "Leading design is about facilitation, establishing a shared vision," Blanski says. Wynne Yelland and Paul Neseth of Locus Architecture see architecture as an exploration of structure and material. "We want to peel back the Sheetrock" and expose the construction underneath." Carolyn Krall and Aaron Parker of A studio believe architecture must be active, not passive, for the client and architect. "If we don't consider how we want to live, those decisions will be made for us," they say.

Over the years, *Architecture Minnesota* has paid special focus to individual architects. In 1987, we featured three "Young Turks." Similarly, in 1992 we published a series of historic and contemporary profiles commemorating architects who shaped Minnesota's built environment during the first 100 years of AIA Minnesota. The featured architects and designers in this issue will be among those establishing the groundwork for the next 100 years.

**ERIC KUDALIS**





CHERYL FOSDICK

**C**heryl Fosdick calls herself a modernist at heart. Little wonder modernism is in her bones. She was raised surrounded by some of the finest examples of modern architecture. As a child in Chicago, she lived in a Mies van der Rohe-designed apartment building. When her father, a mathematician at the Illinois Institute of Technology transferred to the University of Minnesota, Fosdick got her second shot of modernism at age 11; the family moved to St. Paul's University Grove neighborhood, Minnesota's planned academic community featuring small yet design-forward houses by some of the state's finest practitioners of modernism.

Despite her early introduction to innovative design, Fosdick came to architecture only on her second pass through college. She originally studied biochemistry at the universities of Minnesota and Colorado. Only later, with the suggestion and encouragement of an academic mentor, did she switch gears, finishing a bachelor's degree in environmental design in 1985 and

ronment and isolate the various elements," she says. She believes a piece of architecture is a "possession," a possession of the owner and a possession of the context. She also believes that any well-designed piece of architecture embodies a strong visual sense. Architecture, after all, is a visual profession and "seeing is the first open door to the experience of living in a place." The Pruitt cabin, with its strikingly sheared-off massing on the edge of Lake Superior, is a visual set piece igniting the site.

Since designing the Pruitt cabin, Fosdick has continued to develop her design portfolio, with more than 90 built or in-progress works bearing her signature. She co-founded, with David Salmela, the Duluth office of Mulfinger, Susanka, Mahady & Partners in 1989, before folding the office into Salmela Fosdick in 1991. Although her association with Salmela was short-lived, the duo produced a number of award-winning designs, including the Gooseberry Falls State Park Visitor Center/Highway Rest Area. Fosdick struck out on her own in 1994, remaining in Duluth to build a residential-design practice that finds her houses scattered throughout the North Shore and into the North Woods.

Perhaps her most prominent project is a house on the North Shore for a Twin Cities couple. Fosdick came across the commission purely by chance. She was looking at a 220-acre site an hour north of Duluth for a real-estate agency considering subdivision potential. Kathy and Greg Plumb spotted the land while traveling through. Captivated by the gentle shoreline and beautiful woodland, they bought the property—all 220 acres of it. About five months later Fosdick got a call from Greg Plumb, who received her name



PETER KERZE

a master's in architecture from the University of Minnesota in 1988, more than 10 years after first entering college.

That delayed start, coupled with her science background, may account partially for the mature and thoughtful quality of her work so soon out of architecture school. She won an AIA Minnesota Honor Award for a cabin she designed on the North Shore outside of Duluth while part of Salmela Fosdick, Ltd., in 1991.

The Pruitt cabin, designed for a retired Minneapolis couple, expresses many of the themes that influence her work today. Fosdick believes that designing any piece of architecture must start with the land. "I assemble a building around a physical envi-

through a referral. The couple hired her to design a house for them while they headed to South Africa for a 3-year business stint. They wanted a new house upon their return.

Fosdick designed the house in their absence, sending plans and drawings via fax and e-mail to South Africa. The couple visited the site only three times during construction. Fosdick pulled both Scandinavian and Japanese influences into the 3,800-square-foot house. She designed the house as a series of rigidly ordered, interconnected rooms, basing the plan on the principles of a Scandinavian farmstead with its individual buildings oriented to each other on the landscape. As with Japanese architecture, the house is spare and elegant, and minimally detailed with cedar, copper and stone.

While designing the Plumb's house long-distance proved one form of challenge, designing a house in the woods near Ely for a vision-impaired woman has proved another challenge. Fosdick called her master's thesis "The Abstraction of Sight, Learning to Re-see," to explore architecture as a visual medium. But when the client is vision-impaired, the medium takes on new forms. Fosdick describes Betty Wilzbacher as a true North

# Cheryl Fosdick





PETER KERZE



PETER KERZE

Woods woman who moved to northern Minnesota from Colorado. Suffering from a degenerative eye disease, Wilzbacher's ability to see light and shadows eventually may fade to black. She approached Fosdick with an \$80,000 bud-

get, and Fosdick responded with a 16-by-16-foot, 3-story cabin. Fosdick exaggerated certain proportions of the house to enhance Wilzbacher's limited vision. Because Wilzbacher can see light and forms, Fosdick sited the house tightly into the woods so that the client can get right up to the trees, and Fosdick opened the interior to as much light as possible. The vertical massing eliminates expansive floor plans and makes it easier to navigate between rooms.

Fosdick says that the creative process is "deliberately abstract; it's about selecting new visual relationships from the site and program." In Wilzbacher's house, Fosdick clearly rearranged the visual menu.

In other projects as well, Fosdick plays with geometry, scale, color and material to create tension and interest. The addition to the Leake residence in Duluth works with an existing 1950s vocabulary, but steps beyond it with color and forms. The Clure/Munter house, built on a hillside west of downtown Duluth, is essentially two houses for two related families, with the "subhouse" transposed 90 degrees to the other. Fosdick calls this one of her favorite houses, in part because of the use of such unusual interior materials as concrete block and salvaged wood, the extraordinary spirit of the family of clients, and the extreme challenges of the site.

Says Fosdick, "Both making and appreciating architecture is substantially a process of seeing relationships and recording them through the built form."

**Eric Kudalis**

*Cheryl Fosdick's northern Minnesota designs include the Clure/Munter house (opposite top), the Plumb residence (opposite center) on the Lake Superior shoreline, the Leake remodeling (top exterior and interior), and the 3-story Wilzbacher house (right).*



PETER KERZE





**W**ith the simple click of a mouse, you can scan the downtown-Minneapolis skyline from the 20th floor of a proposed high-rise. Curious what it looks like a few floors up from there. Click again and take in a 360-degree view of Minneapolis from the 23rd floors. Things look great up high, but what about down on the street? It's easy enough to find out with this CD-ROM virtual-reality tour, which takes potential new tenants on a stroll along the Nicollet Mall streetscape to meet the neighbors.

In virtual-reality cyberworld, clients and prospective tenants no longer struggle with architects' drawings and plans to imagine what their new space will look like. Today, interactive CD-ROMs and 3-D video animation are the architects' new marketing tool and presentation format to simulate proposed architectural projects.

At Shea Architects, 3-D video-animation and digital presentation are big business, and getting bigger under the spirited direction Patrick Leong, who oversees Shea's new media division, Cybertects.SHEA. While most firms, especially larger ones, have 3-D visual-presentation capabilities, Shea is a bit different. Shea has positioned Cybertects.SHEA as a separate revenue-producing company within the architecture firm. In fact, Cybertects.Shea pursues nearly 50 percent of its work outside of the architecture firm's own client base to design custom multimedia marketing-and-communication presentations for a diverse range of clients, from corporate and architectural clients to advertising agencies and commercial real-estate developers.

Leong, who graduated from the University of Minnesota's architecture program in 1990, is one of a growing number of architecture-trained professionals who is pursuing a nontraditional career path, using his training to promote the architectural profession outside of strict design. Yet he didn't start out that way. During his first five years after graduating from college, he followed the standard route of a young graduate. He began at RSP, primarily working in design and doing a lot of hand rendering under the guidance of Michael Plautz. Yet he always had an interest in emerging technology since taking a computer-design course at the University. When he moved to Cuningham Group in 1994, Leong had begun to buy a lot of computer equipment on his own. "Once you start buying equipment and new technology it leads to more," Leong says. He did some 3-D rendering at Cuningham on his own equipment while taking on a number of freelance projects to help pay for his ever-expanding computer investments. From Cuningham he moved to Pope Associates, but quickly switched to Shea Architects in 1996 "because Shea has always been exploring the new technology," he says.

Founding principal David Shea says that Leong's interest in technology was the reason the firm moved forward with Cybertects.SHEA. "Patrick emerged to create the position," Shea says. "He has a strong business sense, and his ability to be a futurist has helped push the envelope. He's constantly coming back with new ideas and stirring up the pot."

Overseeing a staff of five and a wealth of computer equipment and technology on the sixth floor of Shea's downtown-Minneapolis office in Butler Square, Leong views Cybertects.SHEA as a natural progression for the architecture profession in which strong communication becomes more important. "It's all about how you distinguish your product from others," Leong says. To distinguish clients and their products from the competition, Leong



COURTESY SHEA ARCHITECTS

# Patrick Leong





and Shea anticipate further growth within the multimedia division to reach approximately 10 to 14 people within a few years.

"The architectural business is changing and expanding," Shea says. "It's a communication business that goes beyond walls. If we don't expand ourselves we wither. Patrick is an example of that expansion." **E.K.**

*Patrick Loeng's electronic presentations include a video highlighting proposals for E Block in downtown Minneapolis (opposite center), with a helicopter scanning a digital model of the cityscape (opposite top); a scientific animation showing air flow through a mechanical system (top); a 3-D video-animation, virtual walk-through of a Synthetic Cafe (above); and a real-time, virtual-reality tour of Nicollet Mall (right).*







**W**hen David Goehring opened his own practice, he set a professional agenda to become involved in the community. Specializing in residential design, especially high-end residences (as many of Goehring's commissions tend to be) can somewhat insulate you from the larger community. After all, not everyone can afford an architect or a large house on a lake. With the completion this spring of Grace House II, a residential foster-care facility in south Minneapolis for people living with HIV/AIDS, Goehring certainly has accepted his own challenge of reaching out to the community.

Grace House is an unusual example of architects, designers and artists donating time, energy and resources for a good cause—in this case creating a comforting, homelike environment for people often in the final stages of their illness. For Goehring and his wife/business manager, Rose, getting involved in Grace House was a natural professional challenge. They moved to the Twin Cities from San Francisco in 1990 after feeling the need for a professional change of venue. They had been involved in many AIDS-related functions in San Francisco and immediately sought such related efforts here.

To win the Grace House commission, Goehring collaborated with Joel May, a Denver architect with experience designing hospices and senior housing. In its winning proposal, the team not only outlined its architectural services but offered to oversee fundraising efforts and head a cooperative of eight interior designers who donated services and materials to furnish the interior. The team further coordinated the grand-opening Gala Benefit and Silent Auction once the house was completed this spring.

# David Goehring



DAVID GOEHRING

For Goehring, this total involvement, from design services to donated fundraising efforts and numerous other in-kind efforts, "created a real connection to the house that went beyond the architecture." Goehring says that he particularly enjoyed collaborating with other architects and designers, and wants to pursue other such collaborative efforts. "I would like to see our office become a kind of nerve center of creative collaborations," he says.

Since opening his own practice in 1995, Goehring has espoused collaborative efforts with other designers. He began his career in Washington, D.C., after graduating from Virginia Polytechnical Institute in 1981. In the mid-1980s, Goehring moved to San Francisco and met Rose, whose involvement in arts and fashion as a public-relations specialist helped influence his ideas of architecture. Goehring went to work as a staff architect for architect Sandy Walker, who showed him that "an architect's finest hour may well come from the balanced collaboration with a talented interior designer." Goehring credits such other interior designers as Paul Weisman and Michael Taylor of San Francisco and Joan Shindler of New York City for fueling his appreciation of strong interiors. His exposure to art, fashion and design convinced him that "architecture is the ultimate art form, combining art and technology."

Certainly this appreciation for art and interior design is evident in Goehring's own home, where he has set up his office on the third-floor finished attic while Rose has her painting studio on the first floor. The interior of the Shingle-style house, which he designed on St. Paul's historic Iglehart Av-





DAVID GOEHRING

enue, is a full palette of colors and finishes he selected in consultation with Rose. He partially modeled his home office after that of Sandy Walker, who worked out of the top floor of his renovated Ghiradelli Square Victorian office in San Francisco. As convenient as it is to have a home office, Goehring's four-person business is squeezed for space and will soon seek larger quarters elsewhere.

For the future, Goehring sees expanding his client base to include more urban-oriented and community-based projects. He's also set his sights on the Netherlands, Rose's childhood home, where he hopes to establish professional ties in a region he calls "architecturally progressive" in its support of innovative modern architecture.

Despite his growing client base in the Twin Cities, Goehring feels no pressure to take on new commissions for the sake of simply adding to the client roster. He believes in choosing clients wisely, making sure the potential business relationship is a good fit. Goehring takes a contextual approach to design, fitting the project into the existing character of the neighborhood and tailoring the design to the individual client's needs. Grace House, for example, looks like a traditional 2-story, south-Minneapolis bungalow with its eyebrow roof sheltering a front porch.

Committed to creating beautiful and meaningful architecture, Goehring says that the client, nonetheless, is the final designer on any project. "The owner has a vision," Goehring says, "and they are paying for our rights to be architects. You really have to listen to your client."

**E.K.**



CHRISTIAN WILDMAN

David Goehring's recent projects are a design for a Minneapolis house (opposite), Grace House (top exterior and interior), and a shingle-style house (above) in White Bear Lake.





**M**any young architects set their sights on establishing their own firms to pursue the kind of personal, creative projects that often seem elusive in a large-firm, corporate environment. Bill Blanski, as with many of his young colleagues, stepped out on his own a couple years ago. But he discovered he was happier working in a large firm.

"I had to prove to myself that I could do it on my own," Blanski says. "I discovered it was easy to make a living as an independent architect. I also discovered that I like to practice architecture in a collaborative team environment. I realized I could do more relevant work in a large firm."

His new position at Hammel Green and Abrahamson puts him squarely in a team-building position. As a vice president, partner and senior project designer, Blanski takes a firm-wide approach to his position, which he views as evolving. HGA is

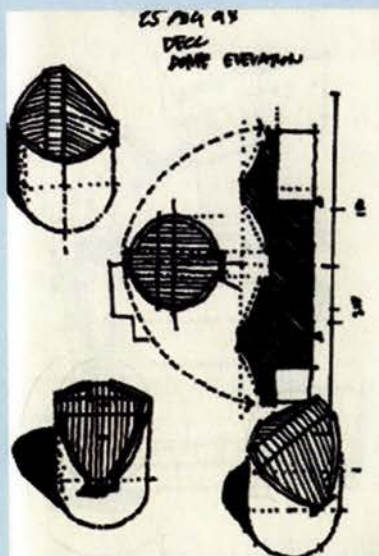
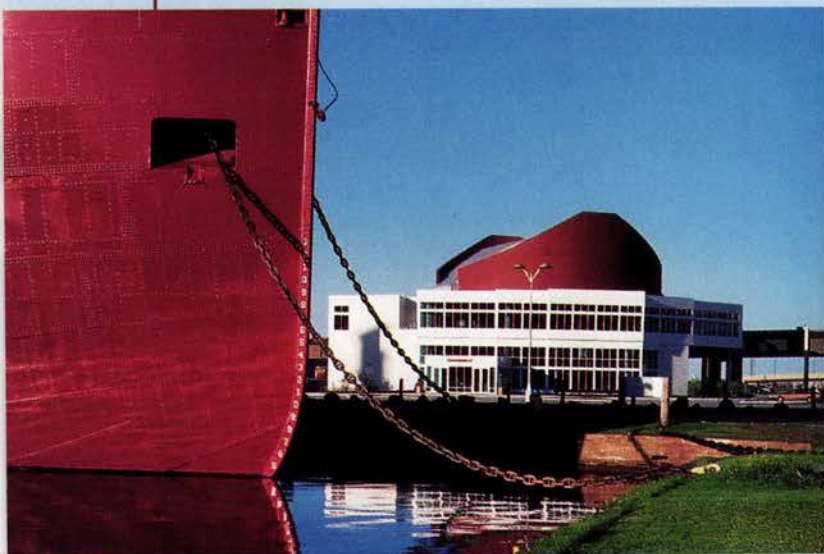
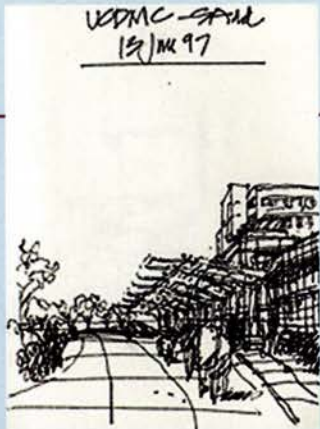
akin to several smaller firms under one roof, with cultural/religious, health care, education and corporate working as fairly independent divisions. HGA historically has had a strong persona established by its founding principals: Richard Hammel, Curt Green and Bruce Abrahamson. With Hammel deceased and Abrahamson and Green retired, the 370-person firm has found itself in a bit of an identity-defining mode as it aggressively pursues more national clients and ups its national image.

Blanski's role, in part, is to bridge the gap between the different divisions and open communication to ensure that the entire firm is in synch. HGA has always prided itself on promoting individual talent. Blanski will continue that tradition.

"Bill is a great team leader," says Dan Avchen, CEO. "He can take individual talents and combine them into a strong team. He has a strong design eye. As you grow from a local to a national firm, you need talent and you need someone who can recruit other talent. Bill will heighten interaction among the firm's different divisions and various talents and further foster the notion of teamwork."

Blanski has been with HGA—on and off—since his undergraduate years in the University of Minnesota's architecture program, where he completed his bachelor's in 1984 before finishing a master's from Yale University in 1987. His new position is really a homecoming.

He has worked on some of HGA's most lauded projects, including an addition and atrium at 3M and the Weesner Family Amphitheater at the Minnesota Zoo, on which he collaborated with landscape architect Tom Oslund. Blanski calls the amphitheater a defining project, his first major work outside of graduate school. "It combined structure, connection to the land and collaboration," Blanski says. As with the 3M commission, Weesner derived much of its architectural pizzazz



# Bill Blanski





through its structure. "I'm personally interested in structure; I like a building that expresses its skeletal experience," he says.

Along with the professional highs, there were such controversies as the renovation of Ralph Rapson's renowned Guthrie Theater, which engendered outcries within the Twin Cities preservation community. Blanski, who stands by the renovation and defends the client's decision to rework the deteriorating façade, calls that a "soul-searching experience."

With his home base in the corporate division, Blanski has moved on to much larger projects. Although large-scale projects don't necessarily offer the opportunity for a personal design statement, the basics of design remain the same. "Every time I start a project, I begin with getting to know the site and the region," he says. "I do a lot of studying of the vernacular construction and architecture of the region. I also try to get inside the head of the client, figuring out what they need to know, what makes them tick, and then let the architecture express that. Whether it's a big or small project, you are starting with the same basic principles."

Big or small, Blanski also believes you get to know a project by sketching it, a rarity in this age of computer-rendered drawings and plans. "It's about always keeping the pen and paper handy," he says. He's an avid daily sketcher, and even teaches an architectural drawing class at the University of Minnesota, where he's taught design since 1991. He says that drawing keeps his design eye sharp as he strives to "dovetail the rigor of drawing into my design work."

That rigor is reflected in one of his current big-ticket projects, an addition and entrance pavilion to the University of California-Davis Medical Center complex. The 360-bed facility, a central "box" surrounded by stretching wings of glass and metal panels, creates a new campus entry point. The entrance pavilion derives its compositional beauty from its structural support system. The hospital represents the core of Blanski's role at HGA, combining diverse talents and a team of experts on a single project.

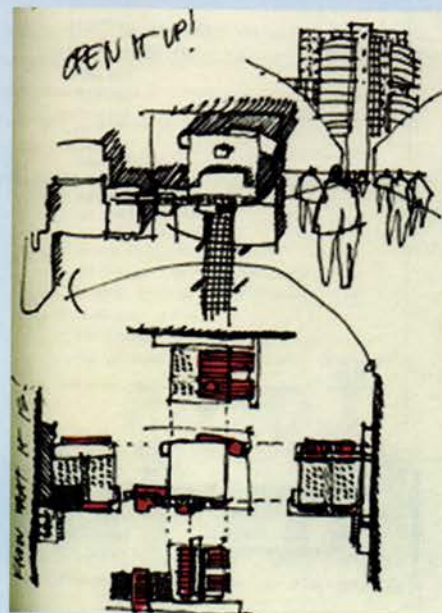
"It's not as important to me to have my own signature on a building," Blanski says. "Leading design is about facilitation, establishing a shared vision."

**E.K.**

*Bill Blanski's portfolio includes sketches and images of the OMNIMAX theater (opposite center) at the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center; sketch and model of the entry pavilion at the University of California-Davis Medical Center (top center), and UC-Davis Hospital tower addition and sketch (right).*



COURTESY HGA







DON F. WONG

**V**isit Paul Neseth and Wynne Yelland and you're likely to find them covered in construction dust. Neseth and Yelland aren't afraid to get their hands dirty as they take a construction-site, hands-on approach to architecture, not only designing projects but building many of them, as well. Together as Locus Architecture since 1994, they are currently putting the final touches on their new office at 24th Street and Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis. A recent visit to their office-in-the-works finds the small storefront address littered with building material and dust. No Armani suits today. A day at the office for Neseth and Yelland often means a little labor, perhaps some drilling, sawing and lifting. "We have more freedom in design if we build it ourselves,"

Yelland says.

Little wonder, with such a hands-on approach to design, that their architecture often has a tactile quality. They build their own designs because they like the feel and texture of materials; not fine and dainty surfaces but raw, sturdy materials. Visit almost any of their recent residential

or small-scale commercial projects and you'll discover a familiar palette—concrete, for instance, along with aluminum, metal, timber and such hardware-store items as exposed screws, nuts and bolts.

A tiny currency exchange they designed on Franklin Avenue in south Minneapolis is a perfect example. Concrete floors and counters are offset with aluminum finishes and hardware. An il-

luminated perforated-metal screen outside announces the concrete-block and brick facility to passersby. "We want to get back to working with raw materials and learn what you can and can't do with them," Neseth says. "In essence, we want to peel back the Sheetrock™ and expose the construction underneath."

Such materials as concrete and aluminum make sound environmental sense to the two architects, who stress the importance of pursuing sustainable design and using energy-efficient products. Aluminum and other metals can be recycled, and concrete is durable, long-lasting and locally produced.

Concrete certainly seems to be one of their favorite choices. They've used it extensively—and quite expressively—not only in the currency exchange, but in the house they designed and built for Paul and his wife Barbara Hahn, in which they stacked walls of concrete block and covered them with a concrete stucco. For an addition they are completing to a traditional house in south Minneapolis, they made similar use of concrete, casting kitchen and bathroom sinks and counters in the material. They also applied such other finishes as slate, copper and perforated metal to complete the addition. Yet, as with the Hahn/Neseth House, the addition fits in quite naturally because—despite its unusual application of materials—it respects the character and massing of the existing houses and neighborhood.

Respecting the neighborhood, while taking a few daring turns, is becoming one of Locus's trademarks. Look at Yelland's own house, which he's remodeling in his spare time. When Yelland and his wife Linda bought this modest one-story bungalow by Minnehaha Creek in south Minneapolis, Yelland immediately went to work transforming it from a dowdy cousin into a neighborhood show-stopper. Despite some of the house's bold gestures—an aggressively slanting tin roof and sun screens with wooden structural supports—the house doesn't overpower the neighboring houses. True, Yelland built upward with a second level, but the house's site

dips down, thus the roof line is in keeping with the height of other neighborhood houses. The lap siding, for instance, is the original 70-year-old siding, which Yelland simply reversed and stained brown. But there's no mistaking that this house is different from the other houses on the block. Above the lap siding, Yelland applied plywood, not a typical exterior material choice, and he punched up the exterior façade with a series of various-size square win-

# Locus Architecture





dows that give the house a geometric edge. This is a house that's clearly been to college.

School, in fact, is where Neseth and Yelland first hooked up. They met as students at Harvard Graduate School of Design in the early 1990s. When Neseth finished he moved back to Minnesota, his home state, to start his own residential-architecture practice in 1992. Yelland, a native of Clarksburg, Calif., stayed in Boston and worked for a former college professor for a year before deciding to move to Minnesota and team up with Neseth.

As with any young firm just getting started, they face the challenge of building a client base and moving into larger and more lucrative commissions. Most of Locus's work thus far has been relatively small, yet Neseth and Yelland have set a five-year agenda to move into larger commercial and community-based neighborhood work. As a two-man shop, however, they realize that snatching that bigger-ticket item can be difficult. They've recently teamed up with LHB Engineers & Architects to go after larger commissions. "Once we get more stable, it will give us more ability to branch out," they say. "We would like to take a regional approach to design and avoid a particular style."

With their ambition and talent, branching out and building a client base is just a matter of course.

**E.K.**



Paul Neseth (on left) and Wynne Yelland of Locus have designed such Twin Cities projects as a currency exchange (opposite center), a house for Paul Neseth and his wife, Barbara (opposite top), a house remodeling (top) for Wynne Yelland and his wife, Linda, and an addition (above) to a traditional house.





COURTESY A STUDIO

**T**he raw attic of their south-Minneapolis house makes for a seemingly impromptu setting for Carolyn Krall and Aaron Parker's new architecture firm, A studio. Positioned under the roof's high pitch are all the tell-tale signs of a typical architecture office, from the computer terminals and drafting tables to the architectural models and drawings, and even the student interns. But sitting in the studio, you never really lose sight of the fact that you are in somebody's house. And listening as Krall and Parker talk back and forth, you never lose sight that this is a husband-and-wife team. Part of the charm and strength of their new firm is its lack of pretension. They have a real hands-on, grass-roots approach to their work. Although they have few built projects since opening shop in 1996, Krall and Parker have outlined a distinct mission.

"We want to do work that strengthens the public realm and looks beyond a single building," they say.

Strengthening that public realm is no easy task in a car-oriented culture that is stretching ever farther from the traditional urban core. "The trend over the past 250 years has witnessed a decline in the public realm," Parker says. "As a culture, we need to concentrate on making places where people come together."

Parker and Krall are broad-based in their approach to architecture and the public realm. Rather than simply looking at a single building or plaza, they are looking at entire neighborhoods and cities to determine factors that support public interaction. "Architects often are perceived as being exterior decorators," Parker says. "But we want to get beyond that stereotype by entering a project early enough in the planning stages to encourage the clients to broaden their perceptions and think globally."

Case in point is the American Swedish Institute on Park Avenue in south Minneapolis. The organization hired A studio to look at its space needs. Taking a strategic-planning approach, Parker began talking to the Institute about the neighborhood and the possibility of sharing such resources as parking. The diverse neighborhood includes such institutions as Honeywell, Ebenezer Hall, Abbott Northwestern Hospital and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, as well as a collection of old mansions. "Many institutions have different needs at different times of day," Parker says. "The idea is to get neighbors and institutions talking to discover what resources they have and what can be shared as a community."

With this panoramic approach to design, the team then is able to focus on more specific design needs for the American Swedish Institute. In planning

stages are an expansion of the Institute and renovation of Turnblad mansion, which is envisioned as the Institute's "pre-eminent" piece in its collection.

The duo's community-wide design vision certainly fueled their involvement this past April in the West Lake Street Charette, sponsored in part by City Councilperson Lisa McDonald's Hennepin-Lyndale-Lake Street Task Force in Minneapolis. The citizen task force, co-chaired by Parker and



GEORGE HEINRICH

# A Studio





Genesis II, a transitional program for women and their children; and will soon start the construction phase of a renovation to the main entry, circulation and popular library area of the downtown-Minneapolis Public Library. In all

Michael Lander of Town Planning Collaborative, was established two years ago to monitor growth and development in the Uptown neighborhood. More than six neighborhoods, as well as business associations, public agencies and designers participated in the charette, which addressed the various development proposals percolating in the study area, bounded by 28th and 31st streets and Humboldt and Garfield avenues. Parker did much of the preliminary work, surveying the neighborhood and preparing graphics that explain why Uptown and Lyn-Lake developed as they did, and highlighting concentrations of parking, businesses, residences and natural features. To maintain the neighborhood's urban character and stock of businesses, the charette addressed a range of issues, from traffic and parking to housing and pedestrian activity. Recommendations included developing district-wide parking—rather than individual, business-by-business parking lots—as well as maintaining properly scaled and consistent street walls that stay within a determined height and come flush with the sidewalk. A studio is currently working with the Highland Park area and the city of St. Paul using similar approaches to community building.

For Parker and Krall, the small, community-focused practice is a departure from their most recent tenure at The Leonard Parker Associates, Architects, Inc., in Minneapolis. The two had lived in New York for a number of years—where Parker had his own office and Krall was an associate partner in the corporate world of Skidmore Owings and Merrill—before Parker decided to return to Minneapolis in 1990. Krall joined TLPA as director of marketing and communications.

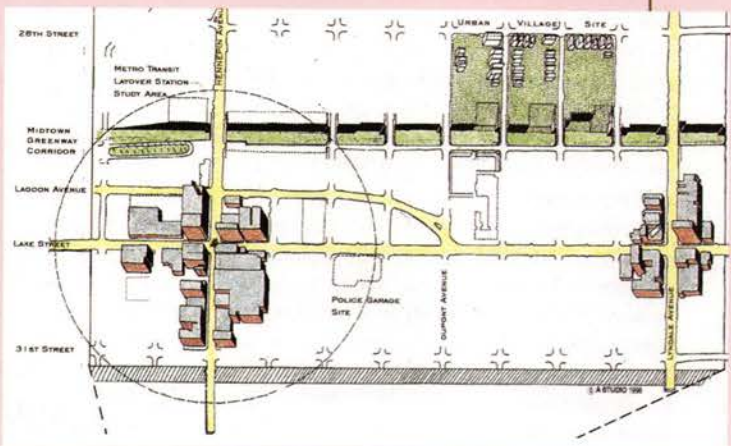
When they went out on their own, they faced the challenge of any new firm—landing commissions. True, most of their work is small, and some, such as the charette, seems a bit intangible, but they have solid architectural projects as well. They designed offices for the Smith Parker law firm in downtown Minneapolis. In addition, they are working on an addition and renovation to the Keneseth Israel Synagogue in St. Louis Park; have completed an upgrade and renovation of

these projects, the idea is to foster interaction between people. For the Synagogue, Krall encouraged a group of volunteers to help paint and spruce up a chapel in the original building. At the Smith Parker offices, they designed an open, egalitarian office with a central space for people to gather. With the library renovation, Parker has developed seating areas with plantings to help soften the library's perceived sterile, uninviting atmosphere and establish a welcoming mood.

Community is the core of their work.

"As technology continues to evolve, there will be more of a demand to create places to gather," they say. "If we don't consider how we want to live, those decisions will be made for us."

E.K.



COURTESY A STUDIO

Built, in-progress and conceptual work by A studio includes the Shepard Davenport Gateway small-area plan (opposite top) for the Highland Park area of St. Paul, the law offices for Smith Parker (opposite center), an addition and renovation of the Keneseth Israel Synagogue (top) in St. Louis Park, and a charette study (above) for the Lyn-Lake-Uptown area in Minneapolis.



# Minnesota green

By Camille LeFevre



Mention the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in Chanhassen and, depending on the company you keep, any number of memories or images may spring to mind and into the conversation. For architects, there's the Leon C. Snyder Education and Research Building, the last building designed by Edwin H. Lundie. Landscape architects may name their favorites among more than a dozen display and specialty gardens, designed by colleagues from Minnesota and around the world. The Arboretum's 4,000 species or cultivars of plants also appeal to landscape architects, plant aficionados and nurserymen, and the Andersen Horticultural Library provides more than 10,000 volumes and publications for reference.

Environmentalists may recount their rambles through prairie and wetland restorations. Workshops in plant propagation, landscape history and garden design inspire home gardeners. Children can recall working in the Learning Center's greenhouse, attending a program about trees, or planting and tending a garden on site. The tea room in the Snyder building, with outdoor patio, is a popular stop for lunch. Fresh-pressed cider is available during the Arboretum's annual Fall Festival.

Local wine growers may weigh in on the success of a new variety of Minnesota-hardy grape released by the Arboretum's Horticultural Research Center. But who hasn't savored the "Haralson" apple introduced by the HRC decades ago, or last year's sensation "Honeycrisp"? We've all tasted some of the more than 80 fruit varieties of apples, grapes, raspberries, plums, blueberries, cherries, apricots, crabapples and strawberries developed by the HRC to thrive in our northern climate—a boon to landscape architects, home gardeners, fruit producers, nurserymen and the general population alike.

In 1998, the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum celebrates 40 years of gardens and 90 years of research. As a center for research, reference, education and enjoyment, the Arboretum is to many Minnesotans a cultural treasure. "I really feel the Arboretum significantly influences quality-of-life issues in Minnesota," says Peter Olin, the Arboretum's current and third director. "As a knowledge base, we've added to people's understanding of plants and growing plants in Minnesota. Our re-

search efforts have had a major effect on the fruit we can grow and eat here. And the demonstrations we provide with our landscaping, restorations and gardens show people how they can beautify and improve the environments in which we live."

The Arboretum also contributes to the state's economy with the climate-hardy additions it makes to the nursery industry. At the other end of the spectrum is the emotional refreshment the Arboretum provides to its visitors. "Just coming out for a visit has a big impact on people," Olin says. "People needing an escape from the city, people who are grieving, business people needing a break in their day...all find the Arboretum a great place to come for a tranquil, aesthetic experience."

The seed that grew into the Upper Midwest's premiere arboretum started in 1956 with the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis. Recognizing the need for plant research in Minnesota's rugged climate, the club approached the Minnesota State Horticultural Society with the idea and a search ensued for a site. An option was taken on 160 acres near the University of Minnesota Fruit Breeding Farm (started in 1907) west of the Twin Cities. With the help of a gift from the Lake Minnetonka Garden Club, the land was purchased in 1958 and turned over to the University of Minnesota. Later that year, the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum was opened as a research and education facility under the Department of Horticulture.

Major expansion occurred in the following decade, made possible in part through the donation of several land parcels. Meanwhile, in 1967, the nearby Fruit Breeding Farm (located a half-mile west of the Arboretum) was renamed the Horticultural Research Center to reflect the increasing diversity of research on its 230 acres. (Activities include breeding of landscape plants, plant cold-hardiness research, propagation techniques for woody plants and vegetable breeding.) In 1985, the HRC was administratively merged with the Arboretum, making the combined unit an important research arm of the University of Minnesota's Department of Horticulture.

Back at the Arboretum, a new administration building had been dedicated in 1974. Constructed from donated plans by St. Paul architect Edwin H. Lundie (who also designed the en-



## For 40 years, the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum has been an oasis of architecture and nature



COURTESY MINNESOTA LANDSCAPE ARBORETUM

trance gate and shade trellises) and with \$1.5 million in donations, the building was named the Leon C. Snyder Education and Research Building after the Arboretum's first director. The three-story building resembles an English country estate, with an exterior of Pennsylvania brick and Douglas fir. The interior features timbers of Douglas fir, white-pine paneling, two fireplaces of Pennsylvania brick and floors of Nemadgi tile from northern Minnesota.

As a focal point for Arboretum activities, the Snyder building contains offices, classrooms, a conservatory, tea room, gift shop and the Elmer L. and Eleanor J. Andersen Horticultural Library. A nonlending reference resource, the Library was donated by former governor Andersen and his wife. Containing more than 8,000 volumes on botany, horticulture, natural history, gardening, landscape architecture and ecology, the Library also houses a special collection of rare botanical illustrations and herbals.

For architects and designers, however, the Library's tour de force is its furnishings by George Nakashima. The two matching reading tables are each constructed from a single slab of American black walnut. And a display table is made from the burl of a 400-year-old English oak. Outside, on the Snyder building terrace, is another artwork of note: Minnesota-sculptor Paul Granlund's bronze sculpture, "Winter and Summer Nymphs." And a viewing structure overlooking the herb garden's English Knot Garden (a garden design originating with the Tudors) was designed by sculptor Andrew Leicester.

Situated on more than 935 acres of rolling terrain, the site of the Arboretum is spectacular in itself. The area contains natural stands of maple, linden, ash and oak, as well as a variety of wetlands, a spring and meadows. "Many arboretums are located on flat terrain," Olin says. "They don't have the quality and character of the land we have here." Over the years, Arboretum staff have developed and added a variety of gardens—including a shrub walk, several herb gardens, perennial and rose gardens, nine home demonstration gardens (which combine plant materials with landscape construction materials and techniques), a wildflower garden, hosta glade and woodland azalea garden.

On the grounds is also the Seisui-Tei or Garden of Pure Water designed by landscape architect Koichi Kawana. "All of our gardens are designed by landscape architects," Olin says. "We have a master plan and solicit different offices to design individual gardens so we end up with a variety of approaches in garden design. In this way, the gardens here become models for home gardeners and other landscape architects." The Arboretum also hosts architectural-restoration classes from the University, planting and design workshops for students, and welcomes students in architecture and landscape architecture to study aspects of the Arboretum as their thesis projects.

As many botanical species around the world continue to hurtle toward extinction, the Arboretum is assuming another role—plant conservation. In addition to helping botanic gardens in such cold climates as Russia and China tend their rare plants, the Arboretum has undertaken several ecological restorations of endangered American flora in its bogs, wetlands and meadows. Also, the 20-acre Bennett-Johnson Prairie restoration captures the look, feel and ecological integrity of the tall-grass prairies that existed in central Minnesota prior to European settlement.

As the Arboretum celebrates its 40th year of gardening and 90th year of research, it's looking once again toward new developments. Ellerbe Becket is in the process of creating a master plan that will include the construction of several new buildings. "Because the Arboretum is a living museum or cultural institution just like an art museum or a zoo, the built environment is an important part of it," Olin explains. Like the Arboretum's rose garden, herb gardens, healing garden, wetlands and prairies, he adds, "the buildings need to be created and tended to reflect the best we can do."

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*The Snyder building (opposite left) is the centerpiece of the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, which features a wide selection of plants and trees in a variety of settings.*



Artists and the building trade  
join forces in the renovation  
of Intermedia Arts' home



DON F. WONG

**M**any owners of public and private buildings, in an effort to sport their civic mindedness or aesthetic sensitivity, will display original, even commissioned works of art in or outside of these edifices. While such paintings and sculpture often add pleasure to the daily lives of office workers and passersby, these artworks rarely have any real aesthetic connection to the building. They're add-ons, accessories, to the building itself. Conversely, art museums are often architectural works of art in themselves, while built to showcase the collections they house.

Leave it to a small interdisciplinary arts organization to take the concept of "art in buildings" to heart, and in so doing transform it entirely.

In renovating its current home (a former auto-repair shop) on Lyndale Avenue in Minneapolis, Intermedia Arts paid artists to design structural and architectural elements of the renovation. A stairway, reception desk and information kiosk, skylight vestibule, conference table, and wall caps and trim are among



## Constructing

the building elements turned over to artists for development and installation. Intermedia Arts calls the project "HomeWorks."

"The idea made sense to us," says Tom Borrup, executive director. "We have artists on our board of directors and, on our staff, and we see artists as integral to everything we do. So why not have artists design and construct integral parts of our physical building. HomeWorks was a perfect way of going about doing this."

Intermedia Arts is a presenter of visual, performance, film and video art that is socially and politically challenging, and explores connections between artistic disciplines, as well as between the arts and society. It offers commissioning programs and mentorship opportunities, and has a gallery, video-editing facilities, workshop area and theater. "We're positioned to showcase artists who are experimenting, willing to show things a little less polished and a little more raw," Borrup says. "HomeWorks reflects a creative environment in which artists are allowed to assume some power and control."





DON F. WONG

# ART

By Camille LeFevre

Originally conceived 25 years ago by a collective of social activists as University Community Video, the arts organization was dedicated to empowering non-mainstream voices through a then-new form of expression—video. The organization gradually expanded to support a variety of artistic mediums. About five years ago, Intermedia Arts analyzed its demographics and learned that most of its audience and artists reside in the diverse Lyn-Lake area of Minneapolis. The organization decided to relocate.

In June 1994, through donations and a mortgage from Western State Bank, Intermedia Arts purchased the Bee-Line Brake and Alignment building at 2822 Lyndale Ave., for \$230,000. After a few alterations to make the space habitable, renovation began with the assistance of architect Pete Keely of Elness Swenson Graham Architects, Inc., of Minneapolis. Funds were contributed, in part, by a \$280,000 bridge loan from the Minneapolis Community Development Agency, grants from area

*Continued on page 50*



COURTESY INTERMEDIA ARTS



DON F. WONG

Intermedia Arts moved into this renovated former auto-repair shop on Lyndale Avenue in Minneapolis (above). Artists collaborated on the renovation to install the Skylight Vestibule (top) by Chicago artist Rodney Swanstrom, Stair Automatic (opposite) by Ill AD, and this series of five movable tables with chairs (above center) that can be combined as a single conference table by Jason S. Brown and Andrew Sinning.



Long neglected, Minneapolis's downtown Mississippi River front is booming with new development and proposals—and sometimes controversy

## Building the river

By Todd Willmert

*First of a two-part article exploring Minneapolis and St. Paul's downtown river fronts.*

**T**he Mississippi River and St. Anthony Falls created Minneapolis, their water power fueling the saw and flour mills responsible for the city's early growth. Minneapolis's 1878 seal features "river" and "falls" as central elements, illustrating that they defined the young city. Yet gradually, Minneapolis and its industries were able to turn their back on the waterway as coal and oil permitted more decentralized development. From

mid-1950s. The logo accompanying this phrase features an abstract sailboat, quite unlike the 1878 seal with its French "En Avant"—loosely translated as "forward"—and its diagrammatic sketch of river, falls and city. Clearly, both symbols and slogans manifest different attitudes, with the modern logo accurately reflecting that Minneapolis recently has paid more attention to its lakes. Minneapolis's Mississippi has become either a ribbon of blue and greenery removed from everyday life—in residential areas—or largely inaccessible by super blocks and surface-parking lots—in the downtown core.

The Mississippi River no longer defines Minneapolis; the relationship between waterway and city has been tenuous for decades. Only recently have links between the two been forged. Riverplace and St. Anthony Main more than 10 years ago, and more recently the Marquette Block and Lourdes Square (*Architecture Minnesota*, March/April 1997) on the river's north bank have met with some success, with the river location itself providing a draw. The adaptive reuse of the Stone Arch Bridge—addressing recreational, cultural and heritage goals—has been more popular than anticipated. The new Federal Reserve Bank building makes a river address ever more prestigious. More recent

projects on the river's downtown side—the widely discussed, controversial "suburban" development just up river from the Federal Reserve Bank—illustrate growing riverfront interest.

Building on this recent attention, the Minneapolis Community Development Agency (MCDA) and the Minneapolis Planning Department are helping define and foster appropriate growth along downtown portions of the Mississippi. Two initiatives for contiguous zones just north of downtown were conceived with the intention to reinforce and develop 24-hour urban neighborhoods along the river. Using extensive public input through charettes and other forums, and mindful of a key city goal of increasing downtown housing, these planning initiatives have produced frameworks for development.

One effort centers on the area bounded by I-35W, South Third Avenue and Washington Avenue—the West Side Milling District on the downtown side of the river. Many historic buildings in this zone—the Crown Roller Mill, for instance—have already been refurbished, with such other key structures as the Milwaukee Road Depot under proposed renovation. These works are significant but isolated—the district is, in fact, predominately composed of surface-parking



*The Milwaukee Road Depot (above) is slated for renovation. The Landings (opposite) is one of many new developments under construction or planned along the Mississippi River banks.*

the turn of the century onward, a city that once literally and metaphorically hugged the river grew away from that essential, initial growth.

Perhaps it's not unexpected that Minneapolis has called itself the "City of Lakes" since the





lots that the MCDA controls. These lots, three and four times the size of Minneapolis's standard downtown block, evolved from the area's industrial needs and rail lines, which created a geometry that blocks the river. Washington Avenue, a significant traffic artery, is a further barrier between the river and downtown proper.

The charge MCDA made to Urban Design Associates (UDA), the Pittsburgh firm leading the planning initiative, was to break down the barriers between the Mississippi River and downtown Minneapolis. By converting surface-parking lots into a low-rise mix of housing, retail and office space, the existing buildings already renovated will be woven into the urban fabric. Complementing the infill, UDA's master plan improves river access through "fingers of green" that reach from the river to Washington Avenue. Within the planning context of narrow streets, corners are articulated and vest-pocket parks created, in a scale complementing the historical mill ruins that are preserved and enhanced in the master plan.

For all the worthwhile objectives addressed in UDA's plan, perhaps the most interesting—as well as the most undeveloped—segment is beyond the study area. Hiawatha Avenue cuts a diagonal swatch through Minneapolis, a significant corri-

dor beginning near the airport and terminating at the Metrodome. Even if light rail is not developed along this route, Hiawatha remains critical. Its importance is recognized in a transit hub—perhaps similar to the garages and bus shelters created where downtown and I-394 mesh—that would serve both the Metrodome and commuters; but the nature of this node as terminus is not fleshed out, nor has its potential to create a Mississippi river-front gateway fully been explored.

That UDA and the MCDA have been compelled to consider the Milling District both with and without a new baseball stadium—or knowing how the Hiawatha corridor will ultimately fit with overall metropolitan transit plans—illustrates that the contentious issue is still open to debate.

An example of the controversies surrounding river-front development followed the unveiling of Rottlund Homes' proposal for a site just up river from Hennepin Avenue and the new Federal Reserve Bank building. Known for its suburban developments, Rottlund proposed 90 gable-roof townhouses that did not appropriately mesh with the historic Warehouse District's river-front area in terms of density, scale and materials, according to area residents and observers. In part because Rot-

tund's proposal provoked such strong criticism, the MCDA and Minneapolis Planning Department sponsored district planning sessions. Lead by Cunningham Group of Minneapolis, the sessions developed consensus and guidelines on appropriate river-front development for the area up river from Hennepin Avenue within the Warehouse District.

Composed of the Star Tribune Plant, Itasca building and other warehouses—both modern and historic structures retaining original uses, or converted into loft housing and offices—the district is a mixed-use enclave in the shadow of downtown. For all the area's popularity and appeal, however, vacant lots abound and the area lacks such amenities as a grocery store, limiting its development as a true 24-hour neighborhood.

The charrette and planning sessions addressed these issues, creating a cohesive vision for development consistent with the district's historic context and character. In arming residents and city planners with design guidelines for renovation and new construction, the intention proactively considered the area's future. The Rottlund proposal and The Landings, a similar 60-unit town-house project by Sherman develop-

## Housing at a glance

### The Landings

Fourth Avenue North and West River Parkway  
Sherman and Associates (Developer)  
Jim Miles (Architect)  
New Construction  
Sixty upscale town houses  
First of several phases completed

### RiverStation

Between First and Second Streets at Fourth Avenue North  
The HuntGregory Group (Developer)  
J. Buxell, Ltd. (Architect)  
New Construction  
Twelve brick and stone buildings offering both single and two-level units  
First phase nearing completion

### Creamettes Apartments

First Street North  
Between Fourth and Fifth avenues  
Brighton Development (Developer)  
Paul Madson + Associates (Architect)  
Historic Renovation/New Construction  
Twenty-eight loft-style apartments in historic building, plus 72 units in new construction  
Completion 1999

### Oakwood Apartments

129 Second Street North  
HuntGregory Group (Developer)  
J. Buxell, Ltd. (Architect)  
Historic Renovation  
Series of lofts, and one- and two-bedroom apartments in former Tension Envelope building  
Completed 1997

### NorthStar Lofts

Portland Avenue and Second Street South  
Brighton Development (Developer)  
Paul Madson + Associates (Architect)  
Historic Renovation  
Thirty-six condominiums in historic North Star Woolen Mill's utility building  
Completion Spring 1999

### Renaissance on The River

301 and 330 River Street and One Fourth Avenue North  
Rottlund Homes (Developer)  
New Construction  
Ninety town houses  
Groundbreaking pending

*Continued on page 52*



# Saratoga of the West

Minnesota's love affair with the lakeside cabin is deeply rooted in the state's history

By Paul Clifford Larson

The following is excerpted from *A Place at the Lake* by Paul Clifford Larson with permission of the publisher, Afton Historical Society Press, Afton, Minn. *A Place at the Lake* is available in local bookstores and gift stores, or direct from the publisher. Send \$45 plus \$2.93 Minnesota sales tax (if applicable) and \$2 shipping (49.93 total) to Afton Historical Society Press, P.O. Box 100, Afton, MN 55001. To order by phone, call 1 (800) 436-8443.

**M**innesota's lakes have enticed a stream of tourists and temporary residents for well over a hundred summers. To a modern Midwesterner, spoiled by a road system that can take him to the water's edge, a weekend by the lake has come to seem as natural as a day at the office. But a century and a half ago, when Minnesota stood at the northwestern frontier of the nation, paradise had other guises and the lakes quite a different significance. Geologist and explorer Henry Schoolcraft, popularly credited with the discovery of the source of the Mississippi River, was the first to hazard a guess at the number of Minnesota's lakes. His astonishing estimate, first ventured in

1851, was immortalized in the slogan "Land of Ten Thousand Lakes." That mystifyingly large number helped put the state-to-be on the map. Getting New Englanders to rise from their armchair astonishment or forego the pampering pleasures of the eastern resorts and actually visit one or two of the ten thousand proved to be a far tougher task.

Two lures were dangled before the intrigued but reticent reading public of the East and the South. The first was simply the wilderness itself. As early as 1835, painter George Catlin recommended a "Fashionable Tour" of the Upper Mississippi River that would culminate at St. Anthony Falls. Through the 1840s and 1850s, an increasing number of sightseers took Catlin's advice. Wealthy southerners and easterners set aside their usual comforts and conveniences for the opportunity of experiencing at first-hand

the wild scenery of the river above St. Louis before civilization had made its mark.

The birth of journalism in Minnesota Territory added multiple voices to Catlin's. As Theodore Blegen put it, "every newspaper was a tourist bureau." Leading the way was James M. Goodhue, editor of the *Minnesota Pioneer*. He made his strongest appeal to residents of states and territories bordering on the Mississippi River itself. Epidemics of malaria and cholera were already driving those who could afford it to more northerly climes for the summer. Goodhue invited them to "hurry along through the valley of the Mississippi, its shores studded with town, and farms, flying by islands, prairies, woodlands, bluffs—an ever varied scene of beauty, away up into the land of the wild Dakota, and of cascades and pine forests, and cooling breezes."

Among the first of Minnesota's eastern visitors to

leave the steamboat behind and appreciate those far-flung lakes first hand was itinerant artist Edwin Whitefield. Equal parts aesthete, adventurer and entrepreneur, Whitefield spent his early career, from 1837 to 1856, recording the landscapes and residences of the Hudson and Mississippi Rivers and eastern Canada. In 1856 he traveled up the Mississippi to St. Paul, where he immediately plunged into land speculation and settlement schemes for Minnesota Territory. His first venture took him due west of St. Paul and Minneapolis, past Lake Minnetonka and along the southern border of

COURTESY AFTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESS







*Cabin overlooking Lake Superior (above) from the 1920s; Sylvester M. Cary cottage (opposite), Manitou Island, White Bear Lake, ca. 1892.*

what would become known as the state's Lake Park Region, to a chain of lakes in the Kandiyohi area. Another venture led him farther north, where he purchased land and attempted to resettle his family in the Sauk River Valley, not far from the site that would one day boast the nation's most famous Main Street.

In each foray, Whitefield coupled a romantic absorption in lake scenery, sometimes depicted with exploring parties camping and cavorting along the shore, to a pragmatic interest in land promotion schemes. As an artist, he pronounced that a country

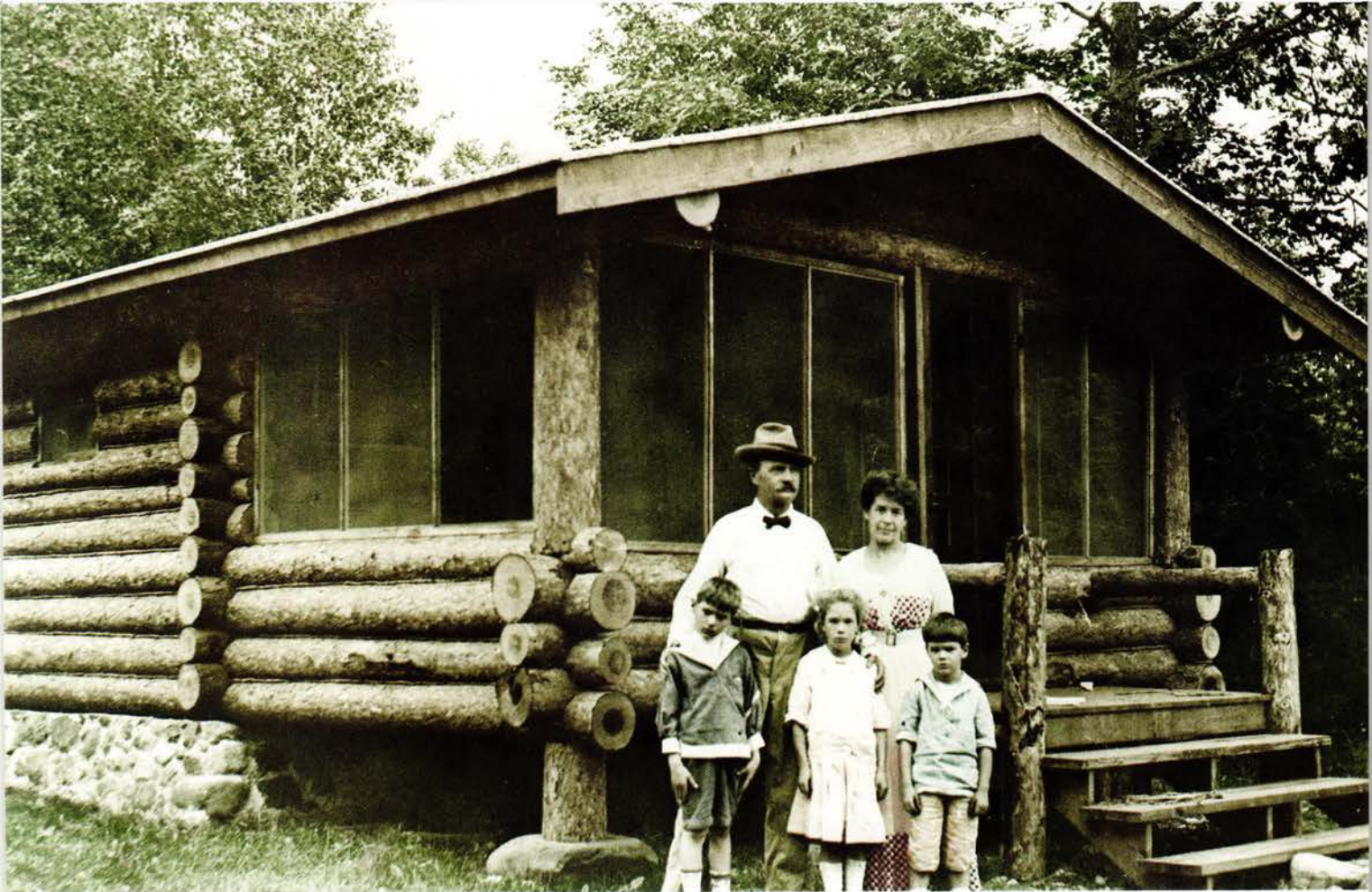
where lakes abounded could not be other than "interesting and agreeable." As a land speculator, he promoted the Sauk River Valley as "The Farmer's Paradise" and Kandiyohi as "The Land of Promise," soon—he thought—destined to be the political center of a new state.

The artist proved the greater prophet than the entrepreneur. Repeated attempts by the Kandiyohi Townsite Company to win the state capitol failed, and Minnesota's first agricultural boom took off farther south. But the surpassing beauty of Minnesota lakes and stream—and their abundance of

fish—would within the next generation lure waves of travelers off of the fashionable river route and through every Minnesota area he painted. None of his land schemes proved to be so well-grounded as his simple declaration that "by the sparkling water of Fairy Lake, on the banks of Minnetonka, or within sight of the spray of St. Anthony's Falls will summer residences be erected."

However prophetic the optimism of Goodhue and Whitefield might prove, Minnesota at midcentury still had a long way to go. Even had the territory not been so distant, placid bodies of water





exerted little drawing power for the fashionable tourist. It was the thrill of the sublime, a sense of awe before the mighty spectacle of nature, that put artists on horseback, made adventure a fashion and enthralled the popular imagination. Mountains met all the requirements of the sublime; so, too, did the vast expanse of the ocean and the torrential leap of cataracts. But the crystalline water and tree-studded shorelines of typical Minnesota lakes, however charming they might be, fell short of the sublime.

Whitefield's modest sketches aside, early depictions of Minnesota generally went along with the prevailing aesthetic by focusing on Minnesota's most dramatic geographical features. After the Civil War, prominent members of the Hudson River school of painting, which was

as close to an academy of sublimity as either side of the Atlantic was to produce, journeyed up the Mississippi to paint the mysteriously shaped bluffs below Lake Pepin, the ragged torrent of St. Anthony Falls and the dramatic river escarpments below Fort Snelling. Even Whitefield made his woodcut of Minnehaha Falls the centerpiece of his Minnesota Land Agency advertisements, and the popular press followed suit with line-cuts of tourists standing or sitting casually at the base of the mighty torrent.

However graphically they were portrayed, these promises of wild and distant beauty were not enough to lure more than an occasional fashionable tourist north in the 1850s. A second enticement had to be added: a resort equipped with all the civilized pleasures of the city left be-

hind. Like the European spa, the destination of the trip had to abound with good food, first-class service and abundant opportunities for social life. If it had any hope of competition with its eastern peers, the wilderness resort also had to promise curative baths of mineral salts.

The seasonal community at Saratoga Springs, located a few miles from the Hudson River in upstate New York, had set the tone and scale for eastern watering holes since the 1820s. Its seaside equivalent was the sprawling summer suburb of Newport in Rhode Island.

With the advent of railroads, the principal routes through the Catskill and Adirondack Mountains in New York and the White Mountains in New Hampshire proliferated with upscale resorts cast in much the same

mold, each evolving into playgrounds for the wealthy. Widely read guidebooks, such as *Bachelder's Popular Resorts and How to Reach Them*, steered countless pleasure seekers to the mammoth hotels, succession of cookie-cutter villas, and medicinal springs of the mountain summering spots or, if a "cure" from natural ocean salts were desired, to similar amenities on the eastern seaboard.

For many years, every attempt was made to make Minnesota fit the mold of fashion, or at least appear to do so. As early as 1853, with statehood still five years away, Minnesota's premier pamphleteer, John W. Bond, claimed "we have springs equal to any in the world." Like Goodhue, he aimed his pitch at southerners. "Gentlemen residing in New Orleans," Bond continued, "can



come here by a quick and delightful conveyance, and bring all that is necessary to make their living comfortable the summer months, and at a trifling expense. For a small sum of money they can purchase a few acres of land on the river and build summer cottages."

Bond's eye was on the Falls of St. Anthony, which he believed would some day "rank with Saratoga, Newport, and the White Mountains as a place of resort." Seven springs gushed from a nearly perpendicular rock face just below the village that shared the name of the waterfall. All that remained for the resort to take its proper place, according to Bond, was the completion of railway connections to Milwaukee and Chicago.

St. Anthony did not have to wait even that long. A grand hotel, the Winslow House, arose in 1856-57, and immediately proved Bond a prophet by attracting throngs of aristocratic summer tourists from the South. Two freshets of the Chalybeate Springs nearby were said to contain all the properties necessary to restore a torpid liver and a flagging circulatory system. All day long, fashionable southern women promenaded down a path arched with grapevines to partake of a sip of the elixir, a moment's rest on rustic benches, and a panoramic view of river, falls and prairie. The men, in the meantime, exercised their fishing rods in the nearby lakes, introducing to Minnesota the split social pattern typical of Adirondack camps and of the state's own summering communities to come.

Extraordinary in scale and cost for so remote a location,

the Winslow House sank as rapidly as it rose. At the first mutterings of war between North and South, the lower Mississippi tide receded. The unspoiled beauty of the site also waned, as erosion and commercial development reduced the falls to a debris-pocked cascade. But the Winslow House paved the way for the grand Minnesota resorts of the late 1870s and early 1880s. More broadly, it initiated widespread interest in Minnesota as a summer destination and spurred additional excursions into the lake region west and north of St. Anthony.

With the sudden demise of the Winslow House, Frontenac, a settlement at the head of Lake Pepin on the Mississippi River, emerged as the next "Newport of the Northwest—the site of the hotels and summer residences of the future." Its claim to such a title revolved around the social instincts and economic ambitions of a single man, Israel Garrard. In the fall of 1854, Garrard left Kentucky for the wilds of Minnesota on a hunting trip and was so impressed with the beauty of Lake Pepin that he took up a tract of land several hundred acres in extent, running for over seven miles along the shore. Three years later he secured purchase of the land as half-breed scrip and immediately set about building a hunting lodge. That galleried mansion, named "St. Hubert's" after the patron saint of hunting, formed the hub of a colony of cottages.

Though railroad publicists and tourism promoters puffed Frontenac as a summer resort well into the 20th century, it never acquired

anything approaching the social glitter, let alone the national repute, of Newport. The residents themselves, led by General Garrard, chose a quieter course when they forced the railroad line connecting Chicago and St. Paul in the 1870s to run west of town. Many who stayed at the lodge or its dependencies were friends or military acquaintances of Garrard, numbering among them such public figures as actor Joseph Jefferson, popular novelist (and general) Charles King, the preacher Henry Ward Beecher and singer-actress Marie Dressler.

The qualities that set St. Hubert's Lodge apart from fashionable eastern resorts marked the path that Minnesota summer residence development as a whole would take. Cottages springing up around it in the 1860s were at first tied to the social activities, and even the eating schedules, of the main lodge,

For all of the attempts to force the Minnesota experience into the preconceptions of fashionable travelers, it was the scenic qualities of the lakes that ultimately won them over. As summer cottages began to proliferate along the shores of the larger lakes, their new residents typically maintained a strong connection to the natural surroundings. Like Israel Garrard, many came to the state to find and hold a piece of untrammelled wilderness. They would have relished a comparison between their bucolic lifestyle and the cynical description of eastern resorts offered by the popular, New York-based Frank Leslie's *Illustrated Newspaper*:

*There is no change but a change for the worse in the way many of us spend the Summer. Instead of reading newspapers and backbiting our neighbors and flirting and*

*Continued on page 52*



Cal's Cabin Camp (above), ca. 1925; Arnold Schwyzer and family in front of log cabin (opposite), Grindstone Lake, ca. 1916.

but as the complex expanded it slowly evolved into a decentralized community of private summer residences. In the following decades, many of Garrard's visitors made use of their stay by scouting out summer properties at purposely remote distances from St. Hubert's Lodge.



predominate building method. Exterior siding was a drop-lap wood type or common lap siding for many cabins. Some northern Minnesota lumber mills produced half-oval wood siding that offered character. Interior walls and ceilings were covered with fiberboard panels. Linoleum floors were easy to maintain. The typical floor plan featured a large open common room with a single bank of kitchen cabinets in

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**In its annual list of  
endangered buildings,  
The Preservation  
Alliance of Minnesota  
noted the “the rustic  
resorts that represent  
the Minnesota  
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north are fast  
disappearing.”**

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one corner. Two walled-off spaces served as bedrooms. Outdoor privies were the typical toilet facility for most cabins until the 1950s.

In its annual list of the 10 most endangered historic buildings, The Preservation Alliance of Minnesota included the early 20th-century resorts of Cass County, Minn., noting “the rustic resorts that represent the Minnesota tradition of going up north to the lake are fast disappearing.”

What do these small resorts have (besides the personal relationships noted by Swenson) that the large operations don't have? Michael Koop, preservation programs specialist for the Minnesota Historical Society, has studied these cabins as a cultural resource. He says the intimacy of the tiny cottages, and the sense of living with the bare essentials in this type of North Woods setting, is an impor-

tant experience from which contemporary society is short-changing itself. Koop notes these resorts are the best type of repeat businesses, as many departing families register for the same week the next year, a tradition that often enough recycles into upcoming generations.

These small cabin resorts represent a cottage industry in the most poignant sense of the term. Whether all of them eventually will be phased out is an open question. Societal transformations are heading in two directions: homogenization of values and niche markets. Disney World offers visitors a replica of a late-19th-century main street, an American vernacular setting increasingly threatened by large retailers and local fire departments using empty storefronts for fire practice. Maybe in the future some theme park will be thoughtful enough to recreate a mom-and-pop lake resort. Maybe some of us would like to visit the place, but would chipmunks like to live there? **AM**

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**up close**  
*Continued from page 19*

think a better fit for architects are such quasi-political, policy-making groups as school boards and planning boards. The goal should be to get more design-sensitive people in decision-making positions.

**What are the challenges facing the architectural profession today? Are these challenges redefining or refining the role of architects?**

The biggest challenge is preparing for the future while still surviving today. We all need to connect with the changes that are occurring. There is a real desire for access to alternative delivery systems, for instance. The history of our profession has been one of separating the designer from the contractor, the builder from the idea generator. Doing this has created very different attitudes about roles and responsibilities. The result is that we have created a tremendous amount of separation between the different segments of the building industry, and enacted laws and regulations that define different roles and responsibilities.

Architects have crafted their role around being the trusted advisor to the client. The contractor developed his role around the ability to build exactly what is shown on a set of drawings. When problems arise, however, the owner—who is ultimately paying all the bills—is caught in the middle as arbiter between architect and contractor.

When a contractor is building the job he is building that job every day, and has direct contact with the owner every day. The designer will meet only periodically with the owner once the design is completed. What I think has happened over time is that contractors have become better at building relationships with owners than architects have. While the architect as a professional has a lot of respect from both owners and contractors, it's not necessarily a respect based on an understanding of what architects do. There is a whole lot of mystery surrounding what architects do, and if there is mystery around something, you don't necessarily trust it. Because of this, I think the architects' role as trusted advisor has significantly diminished. I think one of the reasons that the legislature is clamoring for such alternatives to building methods as design-build is that it is simply looking for other ways in which to deliver this product more hassle-free and with less barriers than has occurred in the past. The client wants to be in control.

The \$64,000 question becomes, how can we as architects best deliver? In the end what we're really delivering is a building to a client. Otherwise it's just paper architecture. It isn't just the design process that architects need to worry about, but the whole building process and integrating that whole. We are currently engaged in redefining the architects' role in the entire building process. Some people shrink from this redefinition, others embrace it. I like to think that I'm in the latter group.

**What defines a great architect?**

A great architect is someone who leaves the world better off than it was before his contribution to the built environment. The difference between good, better and great is the impact of that contribution—and time decides. **AM**





### Hovland Residence

Square Lake, MN

This timber frame addition was hand cut and fit using round rather than planed and squared timbers. The large overhangs and exposed timbers rejuvenate the rustic legacy of the original log cabin. Designed by Katherine Cartrette. Timber frame by Deane Hillbrand. Built by Braden Construction.



### Addition to Private Residence

Minneapolis, MN

Here's a kitchen/family room addition to an older home that still makes use of the existing dining room. Using sliding shoji screens, the room can be separated from the kitchen for more formal occasions. For every day eating the shoji screens remain open, connecting new spaces with existing. Designed by Sarah Susanka with Steve Mooney. Built by Herman Renovation.



### Johnston/Drake Addition

Minneapolis, MN

The heart of this addition in Minneapolis is a new kitchen for an avid cook. There is also a new eating nook that looks over the back yard and a sitting area that houses the family entertainment center. Upstairs is a new bedroom for the couple of the house with a sleeping porch perfect for summer evenings in July. Designed by Tim Fuller with Steven Buetow. Built by Rivertown Builders.

MULFINGER, SUSANKA,  
MAHADY & PARTNERS, INC.  
ARCHITECTS



### Liepke Addition

Minneapolis, MN

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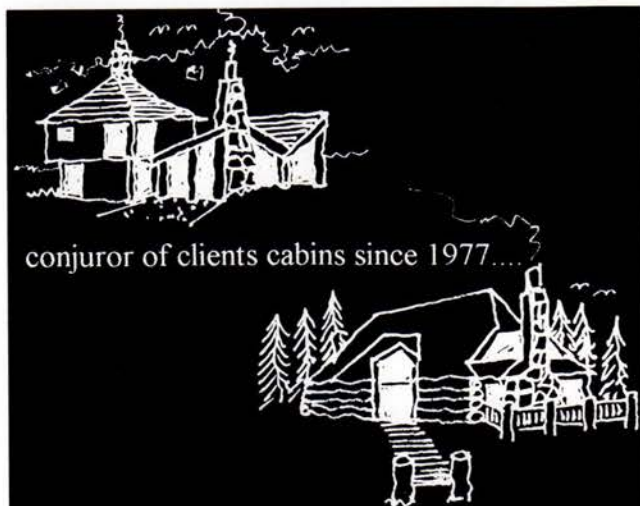
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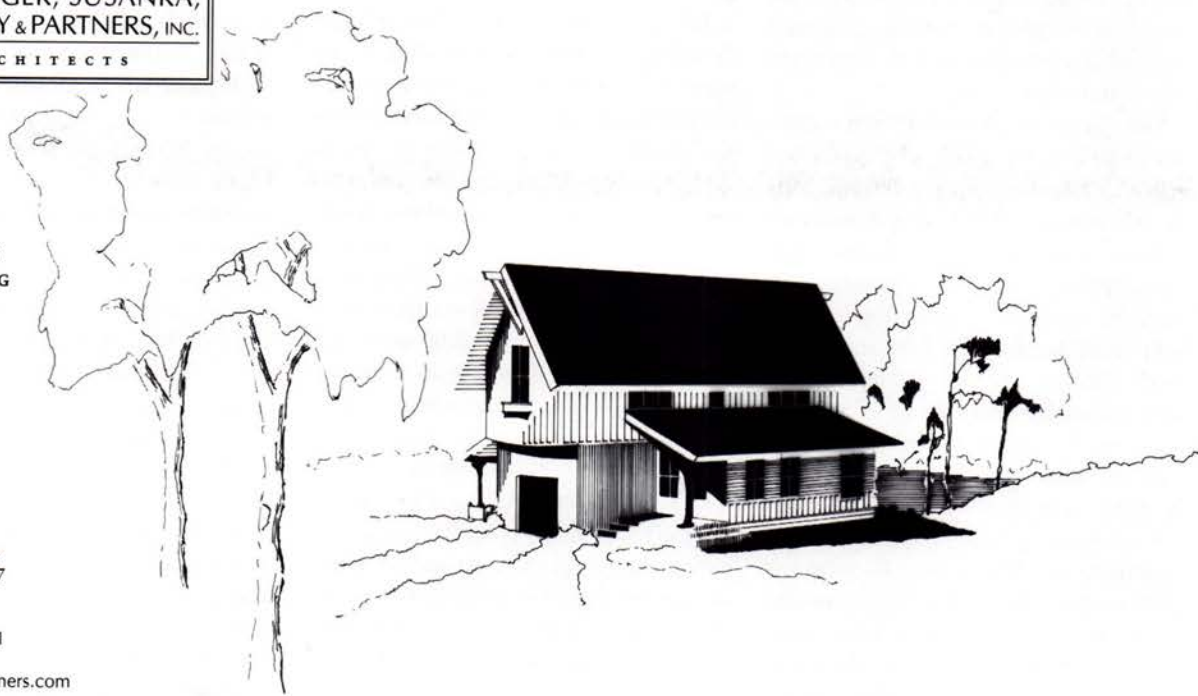
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The planning views of the political left and right seem opposed. But as New York University political scientist Mark Lilla has argued, they are both the product of our "age of reaction." The "Sixties revolution" and the "Reagan revolution," he claims, are "complementary, not contradictory, events" and they have brought "serious political reflection down to absolute zero." That observation suggests that the decline of planning and the public realm parallels a broader decline in political discourse, with polarized positions taking the place of reasoned compromise.

What unites both the political left and right, says Lilla, is the "utopian" belief in "individualistic liberation," whether it be liberation from cultural tradition among those on the left or from economic constraint among those on the right. If nothing else, our country has been busy building that utopia of liberation, be it with single-family homes that physically isolate us from our neighbors, or free-plan commercial buildings that minimize the constraints on change or signature works of architecture that hold up the designer as a model of the liberated loner.

Planning, if defined as the art of finding and creating common ground, has not fared well in a political climate that favors complementary extremes rather than consensus.

Yet, we need planning more than ever, particularly those who most oppose it. Without planning, the left ends up defeating, through fragmentation, what it most wants—empowering communities and interest groups. Not only are cities more than the sum of their neighborhoods, but neighborhoods can go nowhere without a coherent identity and direction in their cities, which planning helps create.

At the same time, without planning the right endangers the very free markets it seeks to protect. As leaders in the business community, from management guru Peter Drucker to multimillionaire investor George Soros have pointed out, capitalism needs social ballast—what some have called "social capital"—to keep it from destroying

what it depends on for its long-term viability, such as healthy workers, safe communities and sustainable resources. Planning helps build that social capital, without which capitalism itself would crumble.

What might the design professions do to support the idea of planning in a political culture hostile to it?

First, the design community must insist that those who we vote into office insulate planning from partisan politics. That may sound politically naive, but it isn't if we recognize planning for what it really is: not a service of government or a tool of politicians, but an oversight and watchdog activity more akin to the accounting or judicial activities of government. We would not tolerate politicians telling a judge how to decide a case or deciding what the accountants can or cannot look at, nor would we accept elected officials dismissing such people based on unpopular decisions or an unwillingness to take orders. Planning is no different. If it is to serve us well, it must be independent, able to look after the common good apart from the myriad public and private self-interests that want to gain some advantage through it.

Second, we must embrace the common good that planning holds up. The problem, of course, is that most professionals work for private clients who want their own needs addressed first, creating a built-in tension that we too often overlook. Many professions have become—and have been perceived by the public to have become—pawns for their private clients, all too willing to do whatever is asked of them within the limits of the law. Such behavior will kill the professions. Planning is one of the few professions that works almost entirely in the public sector and for good reason. It serves as a kind of "meta-profession," reminding us all of our responsibilities as professionals to the public that depends on us.

We need planning, in other words, to protect us from ourselves as professionals and as public servants. There is no greater act of self-interest we could make than to demand that planning remain independent of all self-interest—including our own.

## constructing art

Continued from page 39

foundations (including a \$235,000 challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and \$200,000 from the McKnight Foundation) and individual contributions.

Renovations of the 8,500-square-foot building, which were done in stages, added another 2,000 square feet of interior space. A gallery space with 17-foot ceilings and glass storefront that opens to the street, a mezzanine for administrative offices, bathrooms, editing/dubbing suites, a lounge and black-box theater were carved out of the cavernous space. "While the building renovations have been done through the firm, I helped Intermedia with long-range planning as a volunteer and I've worked with them on my own time at a donation rate," Keely says. "I've worn all sort of hats for the organization beyond traditional architecture. HomeWorks is an example of that."

HomeWorks was originally Keely's idea, according to Borup. Keely brought it up during an Intermedia design-team meeting in 1995. The team, which included Keely, Borup, construction managers Betsy Sohn and Harvey Winje, and several artists, liked the idea. Intermedia, in cooperation with FORECAST Public Artworks, issued a request for proposals seeking artists of all disciplines to contribute to the design and construction of the building. While Intermedia knew it needed such elements as a stairway and a reception desk, the organization was open to other ideas posed by artists.

"We asked for not just a mural on the building or a piece of art," Keely says. "The goal was to incorporate the artists' work into the building, into the bricks and mortar so to speak."

Out of 100 proposals from 29 artists or artist teams, 11 projects were chosen. "It's a very small space," Keely says, "so we looked at how things might fit together, styles that might work together, and whether we could use what they proposed, how buildable it was and whether they were good enough to do it."

AM



In 1996, the Jerome Foundation approved a \$18,000 grant for the first phase of HomeWorks. Rodney Swanstrom installed his "Skylight Vestibule" in the gallery's storefront entryway (he also added a movable wall between the exhibition and main-floor spaces). The skylight features 122 windows made of tempered glass, wire safety glass and clear Plexiglas™ arranged in a random order. A brass-and-steel time capsule by Richard Blue rests in a vault in the concrete floor at the base of the passenger lift. An information kiosk by Chris Krumm and Norbert Marklin is made of birch veneer, with "welcome" in several languages stamped into metal sheeting arcing over built-in lights.

"Stair Automatic," a railing and stairway connecting the main floor and mezzanine, was designed by III AD, a design/build firm. The folded-plate-steel stairs, with glass sides and mahogany rails, resonate with the sound of footsteps. A fictional auto mechanic was the inspiration for the artwork, says Jonathan Query of III AD. In designing the piece, he says, "we created a scenario in which the auto mechanic dreams about a stairway...and it's composed of things he loves...like '60s muscle cars, Peterbilt trucks and his girlfriend who he pictures leaning on the rail of a ship." Observant viewers will catch allusions to this scenario, Query continues, if they examine the underside of the stairs, which resembles the underside of old muscle cars, or see the bottom chrome stair as a truck tipped on end or hold the railing in their hands.

Along the rail of another stairway and across the top of the mezzanine wall, Stanley Shetka and Kirsten Dahl Shetka installed their wall trim and caps made from "ShetkaBoard." A material produced from recycled paper without binding agents, ShetkaBoard has a green, marbled appearance. The trim also has a sidewall-tire pattern (in keeping with the building's automotive history) that gives it a classical, dentil look.

Again in 1997 the Jerome Foundation approved another \$18,000 for the second phase of HomeWorks. Brian Jon Foster installed his vinyl-tile mosaic "Spill of Shibboleths," a colorful path inlaid with symbols that flows from the floors of two rest rooms into the hallway and up the back interior wall of the pas-

senger lift. Krumm finished a birch and fiberboard reception desk with Fiber-glas™ overhead light.

Jason Brown and Andrew Sinning completed "The Cafe as a Communicative Action Site," 16 chairs and five complementary tables designed to assemble into a large conference table. Some of the plywood tables, which have maple tops and treated-wood legs, feature black-board tops and trays for chalk, or built-in trays for pens and paper. A third component of this piece is an expanded sheet-metal media tower that accommodates a VCR, CD/cassette player, and slide and video projectors.

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## **Part of the challenge in HomeWorks was to make an effort to translate between construction and art**

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Intermedia intends to use this table as seating for a planned coffee shop. For now, however, the table is used for office and neighborhood meetings. "The coffee shop has a tradition going back to the French Revolution as a meeting place where people reached consensus, planned ideas and formed communities," Sinning says. "So our response was to build all the tables on casters so they come together to make an elliptical meeting table that represents community."

One of the goals of HomeWorks, Keely says, was to experiment with making artists more a part of construction. While the projects in HomeWorks are successful, he says, the process of conjoining the arts and building trades was less so. Artistic teams like III AD already had construction experience, and knew about budgets, shop drawings and timelines. Other artists didn't, and would show up to install their pieces without having shown the design team any drawings.

"In hindsight," Keely says, "we should have been clearer about timing, shop drawings, some sort of review process of their work. We're too used to the traditional method, and didn't step far enough out of the box and neither did they. Still, the project worked because people put a lot of effort into making it work."

The Intermedia design team also was disappointed that artists and trades people didn't interact to the extent they had originally hoped. "I was looking forward to having them work side by side," says construction manager Betsy Sohn. "The reality was that in some cases, like when installing the tile work, the plumbers had come and gone so it was like any other finishing task and the artist had the room to himself. In other cases, people were just around each other—as when [Swanstrom] was doing skylight fabrication on site while electricians were doing overhead wiring—without having to interact or have their work meet."

Still, Sohn says, artists and trades people "came to develop a relationship. They shared break time. And I tried to provide opportunities for them to share their crafts with each other. I did observe electricians sharing information about their trade and being challenged by the artist to do their trade more creatively, even while the artist was being teased about being a wacky artist type."

Part of her challenge as the construction manager, Sohn continues, "was to make an effort to translate between construction and art. My personal feeling is that those worlds aren't that far apart. And this building is a unique enough project that it didn't draw trades people who would put on blinders and just do their work." Plus, she says, everyone had to work with the "lady construction manager."

"Still, I think construction people, trades people, have much more of a production mentality," Sohn says. "Part of the joy of HomeWorks was having artists come in and remind us that production is one thing and inspiration is another, and that the two can work together. There was tension. But I think it was a good tension."

Throughout the phases of HomeWorks, dialogue also occurred between

*Continued on following page*



## constructing art

*Continued from previous page*

the projects themselves and the evolving architecture of the building. "I like the fact that the interior of Intermedia isn't necessarily a design whole, but is designed around the functional," says Krumm, who created the reception desk and information kiosk. "I've always felt that if on a project you can meet the functional requirements and add an aesthetic level through process and materials, that's really cool and a good thing."

Two HomeWorks projects remain: a remodeling of two rest rooms to reflect Victorian notions of cleanliness and a "straw-bale" workshop. HomeWorks has also inspired artists not originally involved in the project to contribute to the building. Design team member Harvey Winje created a hubcap light, and Intermedia facility and installation coordinator Glenn Davis contributed a magazine shelving module.

"The intention of Intermedia was to create a space that did more than house art, but would become a place that is art," Sohn says. Adds Borup, "Philosophically we want to encourage people to see that artists can have a meaningful role in the design and construction of the built environment. We feel we've accomplished that. And in so doing, we believe HomeWorks will have as big an effect outside of our building, throughout our community, as it has inside." **AM**

## river

*Continued from page 41*

ment, spawned controversy. But other projects under construction—the RiverStation condominium units by J. Buxell, Ltd., and HuntGregory Group, or the Creamettes building conversion into lofts apartments by Paul Madson + Associates and Brighton Development—share more characteristics with the Warehouse District. In adapting buildings or better complementing the existing warehouses and utilitarian structures in terms of material, density and design, these housing developments address the district's context.

In contrast to the Warehouse District's river front, there is little new construction or renovation occurring in the Milling District, although many plans are under consideration. Selected grain elevators are coming

down, while other historic structures and ruins are being shored up. For instance, a proposal calls for turning part of the Washburn-Crosby Mill into the St. Anthony Falls Orientation Center, a joint project of the MCDA and the Minnesota Historical Society, with some preliminary design work by Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle. The North Star Woolen Mill's utility building, a National Historic Landmark, is being converted into lofts by Paul Madson + Associates and Brighton Development. Also, the ground around the Milwaukee Road Depot is being cleaned of pollutants. The MCDA and Shea Architects are working on plans to turn the Depot into a restaurant and hotel, with the adjoining train shed set to reemerge as a skating rink. Next to the Depot, the Design Partnership renovated a vacant building to house a coffee shop, with tenant improvements completed by The Leonard Parker Associates, Architects, Inc. This mix of housing, commercial and cultural projects speaks well of the development mix the city is seeking for the district.

Unlike the Warehouse District's river front, planning in the Milling District is being undertaken before major construction projects commence. With master planning in place—even at a later stage—the prominence of both river-front districts means that future development will be scrutinized. Recognizing that cities are ideally composed of a series of neighborhoods, with a variety of housing types and access to public transportation, the guiding principles behind the planning initiatives foster community development. The city's investment in the city core is paying off, as judged by how quickly housing units are selling along the river. With such demand, MCDA can build on the foresight they had in gaining control of river-front property and avoid the controversy surrounding the Rottlund Homes project by being more discriminating about development proposals.

Of course, for all the talk about rediscovering the river front, the Mississippi River and falls were always there—no matter how much Minneapolis turned its back to them. There have even been other river-front visions, such as the 1917 Plan of Minneapolis. The authors, Daniel Burnham and his protégé Edward Bennett, looked to Paris as their ideal. As in Paris, Minneapolis should embrace the river edge with esplanades and buildings similar to those proposed today, according to the plan. Burnham and Bennett even foresaw the stadium issue, addressing it with an Olympic Stadium on Nicollet Island. With the city's French motto—to say nothing of Minnesota's French motto, *L'Etoile du Nord*—perhaps their vision for a Parisification of Minneapolis was never too far off the mark. **AM**

## saratoga

*Continued from page 45*

*cackling in the city, we get up and spend a good deal of money in getting away to some uncomfortable place where we follow the same profitable course of life, and profess that we are laying up health and renewing ourselves by contact with Nature. Contact with a fiddlestick! Very few of us care two cents for the open country, or the woods, or the seashore. What we do care for is the genus homo, like ourselves, with the varnish of city life.*

Minnesota's early lake resorts were not without precedent, however. At midcentury, wandering sportsmen and wilderness enthusiasts regularly spent weeks in the Adirondack wilderness with nothing to fill their hours but hunting, fishing or just plain sitting. The most famous summer settlement of this sort was the Philosophers Camp, where such luminaries as Ralph Waldo Emerson, James Russell Lowell and Louis Agassiz communed with nature in the late 1850s, two decades before the mountain routes bristled with pleasure palaces belonging to the likes of J. P. Morgan.

After the Civil War, increasing numbers of remote mountain resorts in New York and New Hampshire offered a quiet wilderness experience akin to the ideals of Goodhue and Whitefield. The first generation of Minnesota lake cottages in fact clearly echoed already common Adirondack types. One terminological difference stood out, however. Back east, all summer residents were referred to as campers and their shelters as camps, however elaborate the architecture. The wealthy and the fashionable were every bit as keen on maintaining a show of wilderness exposure as they were on dragging their lifestyle with them. In the self-consciously uncultured Northwest, affectations took the opposite turn. Camping was for tenters, while even the crudest of shacks was called a cottage or villa, the two terms being used indiscriminately if not interchangeably.

The tent was the most primitive form of shelter, but life in and around it, even in the rugged Northwest, might be anything but a primitive experience. In Minnesota as in the Adirondacks, colonies of tents often preceded resorts at the larger lakes and held on as a popular option



among all classes of people even as more permanent structures became available. Tents could be pitched anywhere permission was granted and rent paid, and rural landowners welcomed the opportunity for extra income. For those planning only a night or two, tents afforded the additional advantage of allowing large parties of friends, church groups, social clubs or business associates to sleep, eat and amuse themselves in close proximity to each other yet well apart from other signs of human civilization.

After the turn of the century, in a sort of wilderness echo of the bungalow movement, several tent manufacturers attempted to extend their hold on the upscale market. One St. Paul manufacturer promoted his elaborately engineered patent tent as an "open air cottage." Intended to offer a portable alternative to the picturesque wood cottage, in practice it compromised one of the key virtues of tent camping by requiring wagon cartage to the site. It was the last gasp of high-fashion lakeside tenting. As small parcels became increasingly available for purchase, camping lost ground to cottaging, and the tent returned to its earliest use among tourists—as a simple, highly mobile shelter for sportsmen, outdoor enthusiasts and those for whom high fashion was either unaffordable or undesirable.

The simplest cottage type retained much of the essential form and feel of the natural canvas tent. It was little more

than a gabled rectangle sheathed in vertical boards, their seams closed by narrow battens. A window, two at most, adorned the sides, while a flimsy porch grew out from the gable end. In the most primitive examples, the porch literally reproduced the extended entry flap of the tent. Whitewashing the cabin to preserve it brought it even closer in appearance to its forbear. As with the tent, the entry afforded the primary means of ventilation as well as its tenuous tie to whatever social activities lie outside.

Cottages built in this manner continued to spring up at lakeshore sites well into the 20th century, the only significant changes being additional windows and a substitution of other types of siding. Artistic expression first crept onto the porch, which could boast an ornamented canopy, a formal grid of openings, or millwork elaborated in the current style. Motor lodges of the 1920s and 1930s raised serial editions of the tent-cottage to the status of an icon.

A second summer cottage type sprang from materials available on the site and traded on whatever vernacular was at hand. In the Adirondacks, that meant a log cabin of almost haphazard form, with a canopy or porch built of unmilled tree trunks and sticks. The old vernacular tradition for this kind of construction in the eastern mountains was obviously lacking in a state so new that summer travelers might be the first white men to camp or build on a given lake. Only the birch-bark summer lodges of the Ojibway, many of them still remaining in the heavily forested regions of Minnesota, offered a local prototype with deep traditions. These, however, were far too imbedded in the waning Indian culture. To the white settler, they were simply picturesque relics of an antique and alien culture with little relevance to his summer cottage needs.

Log cabins were, of course, built by many of the state's early settlers as their first fixed dwelling. But as a popular option for recreational building, they had to await a period in which log construction had ceased to be a necessity. Only in a few isolated northern outposts did the first generation of residents use unmilled logs for summer cottage construction. The unusual form of some of these seasonal dwellings suggests that they, like the Adirondack log cabin, derived from

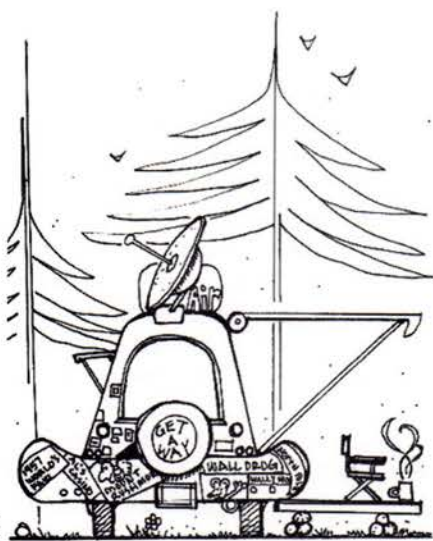
a vernacular source, quite possibly the summer houses of their builders' northern European country of origin. Finns in particular showed an early and persistent preference for log lakeside retreats, along with a great deal of skill in executing them.

Among the increasing number of wealthy cottagers at the lakes, neither of these first two types of summer dwelling quite passed muster. Tentlike structures and vernacular cabins equally failed to allow for the roomy, well-appointed interiors to which the city-based traveler was accustomed. Worse yet, their lakeside elevations were too short to carry the spacious, open porches and outlook towers known as belvederes seen everywhere on the great summer lodges. Responding to these concerns required a third type of summer cottage, one that adapted the new architectural styles of the suburbs to rustic conditions.

The first summer cottages of this type were generally identified as "Swiss" or "Gothic." They carried a steep, sweeping roof, rustic, Adirondack-style porches, and, if the owner fancied it, an abundance of sticklike decoration. Though the terms were often used interchangeably, the "Swiss" label was more likely to be attached to a cottage if it had overhanging balconies, a roof that swayed outward, or a profusion of pierced wooden ornament. Modern historians use the term Stick Style to cover the suburban equivalent of these picturesque cottages.

Scores of rusticated Stick Style dwellings once adorned several of the larger Minnesota lakes, especially in the vicinity of the Twin Cities. They have not weathered changes in fashion or use very well, in part because so much of their floor plan was taken up by scantily supported porches. But such descriptions, sketches and fragments—and one intact house—as have come down to us reveal a wonderfully expressive melding of natural settings with urban habits. Exposed framing timbers, appliqué stick work and treelike porch braces all harmonized with the woods embracing the cottages, at the same time calling for the use of sophisticated milling machinery. And the broad porches themselves were equally exposed to nature and human concourse. A house that was two-

*Continued on following page*



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**saratoga**

*Continued from previous page*

thirds verandas and galleries, surrounded by houses of a similar character, implied a good deal of social interaction, however woodsy its appearance.

Stick Style architecture in its lakeside setting was a bit of a hybrid between its suburban prototypes—which never really caught on in Minnesota—and the folk construction of upstate New York cabins. The rustic furniture often associated with it was even called "Adirondack," and in the 1870s and 1880s no summer porch in any style was deemed complete without the requisite pseudo-folk assembly of bent and carved branches into chairs and lounges. One local manufacturer, R. L. McKenzie of Excelsior on Lake Minnetonka, boasted a clientele in 1876 that included the major hotels of St. Paul and Minneapolis as well as several lakeside resorts.

Closely related to the Stick Style in its dual embrace of urbanity and rusticity was the Shingle Style. The dominant architectural mode of the great mid-1880s Newport Beach resorts, its natural union was with the ground rather than the trees. Not only did it stress long horizontal or diagonal lines, its typical specimens rested on a conspicuous boulder foundation. By 1900 every region of Minnesota boasted houses built in this fashion, many of the more elaborate examples serving as seasonal lake cottages.

All of these early cottage types responded specifically and even eloquently to their natural surroundings. The summer lake residents of this period—or at least those who settled apart from the great lodges—prized the woods as much as the water. Cottages sat well back from the shoreline, and the intervening trees were allowed to stand; typically, a view from the ground floor balconies gave only glimpses of water through the forest. Owners and builders grappled with this limitation by affixing second-story galleries to the lake elevation or overcame it altogether by raising a belvedere high above the roofline. The open corner tower of the Stick or Shingle Style cottage became as visible a mark of the lakeside community as the vast porches fronting its great summer hotels.

Upon the demise of sticks, shingles

and boulders as carriers of artistic meaning for the wealthy, Minnesota cottagers turned to whatever new historically inspired architectural fashion the winds blew in from the East. These were far too diverse to constitute a fourth type. In fact, the high-style cottage was really a retreat from seasonal, environmentally responsive architecture altogether.

With the importation of site-neutral suburban styles came an increased emphasis on lake exposure. The builders of lavish late Queen Anne or colonial revival summer villas invariably cleared the property between the house and the water, with the dual purpose of opening up broad lake prospects and showing off their estate. Only so much of the woodland setting survived as could be incorporated into a landscaping scheme that set off the house in much the same manner as the planting scheme of the suburban lot.

The proliferation of this type of suburban housing along the lakes in fact reflected a much more fundamental change than architectural style or even attitude toward nature. It marked the gradual embrace of the larger lake communities by the life of the nearby city and a transition to year-round lakeside residency. Whether the neighboring urban community was as stable as St. Paul and Minneapolis or as subject to seasonal fluctuations as Detroit Lakes and Alexandria was of little consequence. The 19th-century lake cottage gave way to year-round use, was engulfed by a larger house or disappeared altogether.

Alongside this process of absorption or obliteration of first-generation lake cottages occurred a resurgent interest in the very types of summer dwellings that were being swept away. As the Craftsman movement infiltrated into Minnesota, hordes of summer cottage builders at lakes that remained beyond the reach of suburbia beat a nostalgic retreat to the simplicity of planks and logs. Many of Minnesota's most distinctive lake cottages date from the climactic years of this period, when the automobile first opened vast areas of the North Woods to extensive migratory settlement. Numerous more recent efforts to give a distinctly modern shape to summering on the lake often owe a conscious debt to these revisitations of the hunting and fishing shack and the primitive log cabin.

**AM**



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## Advertising Index

### AIA Convention & Products

Exposition, p. 6

AIA Documents, Cov. III

AIA Minnesota, p. 20

Albinson, p. 1

H. Robert Anderson / DPIC

Companies, p. 12

Estimating Plus, p. 14

Damon Farber Associates,  
p. 14

W. L. Hall Co., p. 2

Krech, O'Brien, Mueller &  
Wass, Inc., p. 48

Jim Mackey Architect, p. 48

Marvin Windows & Doors,  
pp. 16, 17

McMonigal Architects, p. 49

Minnesota Housing Finance  
Agency, p. 14

Minnesota Masonry  
Institute, p. 22

### Minnesota Prestress

Association, p. 8

### Molin Concrete Products

Company, p. 18

Mulfinger, Susanka, Mahady &  
Partners, Inc., p. 47 & 49

Lon Musolf Distributing, p. 12

Neset Architecture, p. 48

Nor-Son, p. 48

A Portfolio of Cabins,  
pp. 48, 49

Ramsey Engler Ltd., p. 4

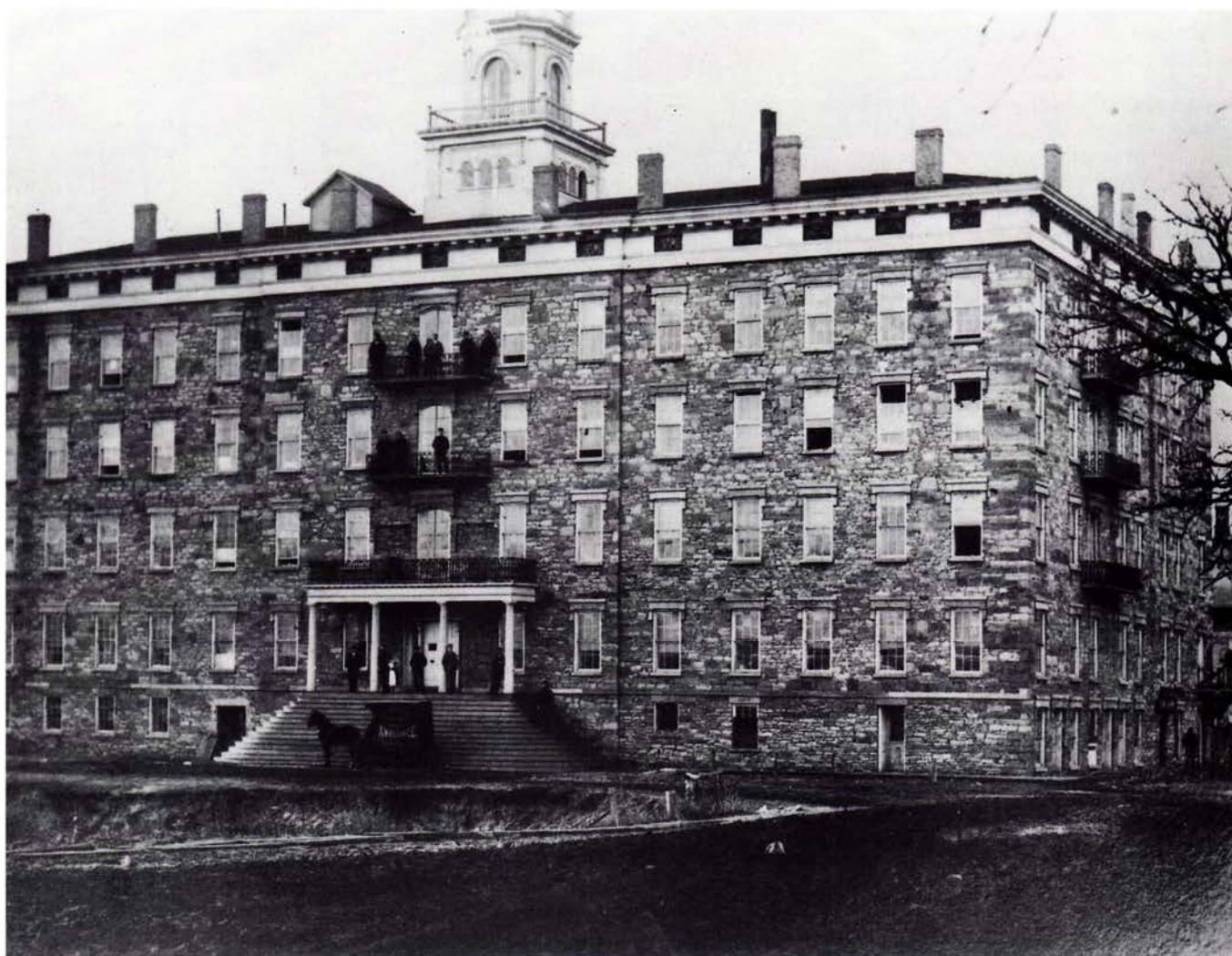
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St. Croix Press, p. 10

The Wood Company, p. 14

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*The Winslow House, East Bank of Mississippi River, St. Anthony, 1857-1887*

Lake Minnetonka and White Bear Lake were not the Twin Cities' only resort spots in years past. Before those places began attracting tourists, the Falls of St. Anthony and the waters of the Chalybeate Springs drew visitors to the Winslow House on the east bank of the Mississippi River. When the first suspension bridge spanning the Mississippi was erected in 1855 near the Falls and groups of tourists from the South began coming (often with their slaves) to Minnesota for reprieves from the summer heat, hotelier James Winslow decided to build a luxurious home for them in the village of St. Anthony (now a part of Minneapolis). He engaged Robert Alden, one of Minnesota's first full-time architects and later the designer of the Academy of Music in Minneapolis,

to draw up the plans. Construction on the Winslow House, easily the largest building in town, began in the spring of 1856 and lasted a year.

When it was completed, Winslow had a 5-story \$110,000 building ruggedly built from Nicollet Island limestone. Situated near the east end of today's Third Avenue Bridge, it had more than 200 rooms, an ornate ballroom and dining room, and \$60,000 in furnishings. A distinctive cupola topped the building.

Guests could hear and see the plunge of the waterfall from the establishment's grounds. Nearby Indian encampments gave Southerners and Easterners the thrill of contact with an unfamiliar culture. And down some steps at the Chalybeate Springs, visitors imbibed glasses of a pungent water

supposedly rich in sulfur, iron and magnesium.

Soon the hostility between the northern and southern states greatly reduced the Winslow House's clientele, and the hotel closed in 1861. During its remaining years, the building served as a health spa, home to Baldwin College (now Macalester College) and the Minnesota College Hospital. At one point, land speculators tried to reduce the Winslow House's value by spreading rumors that the building was haunted. Before its razing in 1887—to clear space for the Minneapolis Exposition Building—firefighters saved an Angel Gabriel weathervane that spun atop the cupola, possibly a sample of French ironwork originally intended for the 1854 New York Exposition. It is now on display at the Hennepin History Museum. *Jack El-Hai*



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