

OCULUS

NEW YORK CHAPTER AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS



MARCH 1962

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR UGLINESS? — N.Y. CONFERENCE HOPES TO FIND OUT

"Characterless buildings, disruptive highway routing, jumbles of signs and overhead wires, and a general lack of attention to the social and aesthetic needs of people..."

These will be some of the targets of the First Conference on Aesthetic Responsibility, sponsored by the Chapter's new pilot Design Committee under **Richard W. Snibbe** and scheduled for April 3.

"The country's dynamic growth has not been matched by a similar dynamism in the design of its cities," says Chairman Snibbe. "Throughout the country there have been editorials and other ex-

pressions of rising citizen concern. The conference will not only serve as a means to focus the expression, but will also attempt to place responsibility on the shoulders of those who can do something to save the face of America from further ugliness."

Among speakers to participate in the Ballroom of the Plaza Hotel will be **Russell Lynes** of *Harper's Magazine*; **Dr. Leonard Carmichael**, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institute; **Dr. David W. Barry** of the New York Board of Missions; **Eric Larrabee** of *American Heritage Magazine*; **Herman Hillman**, New York regional director of the Public Housing Administration, **Ernest Weissmann** of the United Nations' Bureau of Social Affairs, New York builder **Erwin Wolfson**, **Burnham Kelly**, dean of Cornell's school of architecture, noted psychiatrist **Dr. John Schimmel**, and artist **Ad Reinhart**.

The conference will also be concerned with the questions "What are our Aesthetic Values?" and "What are the Aesthetic Responsibilities of Government, Business and Institutions?"

Each speaker will be limited to 10 minutes to allow time for the presentation of many opinions, for question and answer periods, and for small discussion groups. After the discussions, conferees will attempt to arrive at a plan of action. In Snibbe's words: "We do not want the conference to conclude with a mere resolution. We hope to see it start a national movement toward a more beautiful country."

Registration fee is \$35, including lunch. Attendance will be limited to the first 500 sending checks to the Design Committee of the New York Chapter, AIA, 101 Park Avenue (Suite 1605), New York 17.



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NEW YORK CHAPTER

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NEW YORK TO SHINE AT DALLAS CONVENTION

Chapter members and other New Yorkers will play prominent roles in the proceedings at the 1962 AIA Convention in Dallas, May 7-11.

Keynote speaker for the meeting, whose theme is "New Dimensions of Architectural Practice", will be Dean **Charles Colbert** of Columbia's school of architecture. Following Dean Colbert will be **Jane Jacobs**, a senior editor of *Architectural Forum* and well-known author ("The Death and Life of Great American Cities"). Other general sessions will be led by *Forum* Editor **Douglas Haskell**; **Thomas Creighton**, editor of *Progressive Architecture*; and **Emerson Goble**, editor of *Architectural Record*.

Among New Yorkers chosen to receive awards at the convention are: Painter-Muralist **Stuart Davis** (Fine Arts Gold Medal), **Ernst Haas** (Architectural Photography Gold Medal), Critic **Lewis Mumford** (The Citation of Honor), and **Othmar H. Ammann** and the late **Charles S. Whitney**, engineers (Allied Professions Gold Medal). Honorary memberships will also be conferred on **Edith Brazwell Evans**, ex-editor of *Living for Young Homemakers*, and **Perry Prentice**, editor and publisher of *House & Home*.

The Architectural Firm Award, authorized in 1957 but not given until this year, will go for the first time to **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill** for the "high standard of excellence that has distinguished its ar-

chitecture over a wide geographical area and in many building types".

Finally, three buildings designed by Chapter members are among the eight selected to receive Honor Awards: The Tennis Pavilion at Princeton University by **Ballard, Todd & Snibbe**; St. John's Abbey Church in Collegeville, Minn., by **Marcel Breuer & Associates**; and the Towers residence in Essex, Conn., by **Ulrich Franzen**.

BOOKS

Materials for Architecture — By Caleb Hornbostel. Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1961. 610 pp. Illus. \$20.

The need for a comprehensive encyclopedia of building materials has been apparent for some time. The architect, designer, draftsman, and the student have encountered, too often, the time-consuming task of researching a certain material through textbooks, voluminous pages of manufacturer's literature and, of course, the handy telephone. If the use of Mr. Hornbostel's book eliminates some of this waste of time, it would be well worth the extensive research that must have gone into it. However, due to careful indexing, excellent organization, clear and concise text and good illustrations, the book can accomplish much more.

Each material is indexed alphabetically, physical and chemical properties are analyzed, and types, uses and application are described. Basic headings such as "What to watch out for", "Do use", and "Don't use" are clearly set forth.

Some of our more experienced colleagues who have spent years developing their own systems and files may never use the book, (and if they did, they probably wouldn't admit it). But students will find it invaluable for gaining technical knowledge, draftsmen will know the materials they are drawing, and project architects will be able to increase their skill in combining materials. Even designers in browsing may find challenging combinations—all with an important saving of time.

The book has apparent faults, the main one being the time lag in keeping up with technological advances. For example, new fire-

rated acoustical ceilings are not mentioned, nor are some of the newer structural steel sizes. This fault is not unknown to Mr. Hornbostel, who in his preface welcomes suggestions. Since intelligent use of the guide depends on its being kept up to date, a periodic supplement, at least yearly, would seem in order. If the book were produced in a loose-leaf form, rather than bound as it is now, supplements could be added easily and inexpensively by readers themselves.

Mr. Hornbostel can be proud of this major research work, as can the Brunner Scholarship Committee, who through scholarships in 1956 and 1957 enabled him to begin his early research.

Robert Beattie

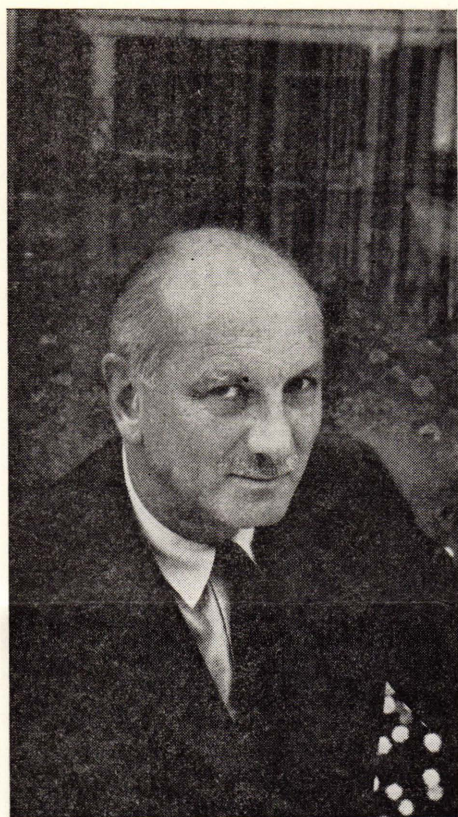
The World of Great Architecture—
By R. Furneaux Jordan, Viking Press, New York, 460 pp. \$22.50.

This volume contains some of the most exquisite and incisive color photographs ever taken of the important buildings of the last 2,500 years.

Of particular interest are the interior shots, which contribute greatly in their hues towards the illusion of space in a two-dimensional photograph. This has been accomplished in many instances by artificially illuminating the great spaces of Roman, Medieval, Byzantine and Renaissance structures. Although this technique may affront purists, it provides a lucid image of color, detail, and continuity of form rather than the romanticized picture so common to architectural photography. The photographs simply reflect what architects already know: if you want to experience an architectural space you must be in it. To sense the full effect of solemnity and awe of the Galla Placidia, from the light filtering through the thin alabaster sheets to the glistening surfaces of mosaics, you must be there. In the book the interior is illuminated and the workmanship rather than the effect is made apparent.

Notes for each of the plates by Dr. Bodo Cichy sum up the relevant features of each structure. The text is a scholarly and lively discourse by R. Furneaux Jordan that fully complements the color photography.

Robert Djerejian



MUMFORD LUNCHEON

On April 12th, the Chapter will hold a luncheon at 12:30 p.m. at the Architectural League honoring author Lewis Mumford. At that time he will be presented with the Chapter's 1962 Award of Merit, in light of his lectures, articles, and books displaying a broad vision of society and a deep understanding of the problems, achievements and goals of architects and planners.

TALK SCHEDULED ON "LEGAL PITFALLS"

The Meetings Committee has scheduled a talk by Nathan Walker, Legal Counsel of the Chapter, on the subject "Legal Pitfalls in the Architectural Profession". It will be held at 4:30 p.m. at the Architectural League, Tuesday, Mar. 27.

DALLAS FLIGHT TICKETS

For the convenience of those attending the AIA Convention in Dallas May 7-11, American Airlines has set up a special telephone number to handle reservations of New York Chapter members. Tickets may be ordered through Phil Herst at Longacre 4-8346, and, if desired, will be mailed promptly to the purchaser with an invoice.

CHAPTER HEARS ABOUT DESIGN FOR FALLOUT

Interested chapter members were exposed on January 30 to an informed discussion on radioactive fallout and the best current thinking on how to design protective structures to resist its effects. The speaker was one of the nation's top authorities, Neal FitzSimons, an experienced engineer now serving in Washington as Director of the Office of Civil Defense, Department of Defense.

Mr. FitzSimons described in detail both the characteristics of nuclear explosions and the technical problems in planning for protection against them. Beyond the critical blast area, he said, shelters must resist or be shielded from hurricane force winds, earthquake-type shock waves, and fires which could be started by the intense heat wave. Ventilating systems must be solid, and well-anchored to resist destruction by shock wave or heat. Shelving should be closed so shock will not knock contents off. Shelters must be designed to protect against "early" fallout because it consists of the large particles of matter vaporized by the blast, intensely radioactive and heavy enough to return to earth the same day as the blast. In size these particles can go through a 16 mesh screen. Winds may scat-

ter this lethal early fallout over an area much larger than the blast area, making good shelters necessary, even many miles from the actual blast area. The delayed fallout, of much smaller size and filtering out of the upper atmosphere, such as that from high altitude tests or after effects of a blast, are not so serious.

It was suggested that those desiring more complete information write to the Defense Department for its latest booklets.

F. Marshall Smith

CHAPTER OFFICE NOTES

- Recent balloting resulted in the election of the following members to the 1962 Nominations Committee: Robert S. Hutchins, Walter H. Kilham, Jr., Ronald Allwork, Harry M. Prince, and Gillet Lefferts, Jr.
- The Joseph Gross Pavilion of the Hebrew Home and Hospital of New Jersey in Jersey City, N. J., the subject of a Hospital and Health Committee field trip recently, was designed and completed by Katz Waisman Blumenkranz Stein Weber, Architects Associated, Jerome L. Strauss, Consulting Engineer; not Katz, Waisman, Weber and Strauss — Joseph Blumenkranz, Consultant, as reported in the announcement of the trip issued by the Chapter Office.

COMING EVENTS

MARCH 21	Wednesday, 12:30, Gallery A School Committee Luncheon
MARCH 27	Tuesday, 5:15, Gallery A Lecture by Nathan Walker, "Legal Pitfalls in Architecture"
APRIL 3	Tuesday, Full Day Conference Plaza Hotel "Aesthetic Responsibility"
APRIL 10	Tuesday, 12:30, Gallery A Pre-Convention Luncheon
APRIL 12	Thursday, 12:30, Dining Room Lewis Mumford Luncheon
APRIL 17	Tuesday, 5:15, Gallery A Technical Committee Lecture: "Structural Concrete"
APRIL 18	Wednesday, 5:15 Gallery A Hospital and Health Discussion Group
MAY 7-11	A.I.A. Convention—Dallas, Texas

MATERIAL REQUESTED FOR STATE MAGAZINE

Chapter member Samuel M. Kurtz, newly appointed Editor of the New York State Association of Architects' official publication, Empire State Architect, invites the cooperation of fellow members in submitting material for publication.

Planned features for coming issues include: Housing, Hotels, and Apartment Houses (March-April issue); Educational Buildings, Legislative Report (May-June); Industrial, Factory, and Mercantile Buildings (July-August); Churches and Hospitals (Nov.-Dec. issue).

All material submitted for publication should be sent to the Empire State Architect, 441 Lexington Avenue, New York 17, N. Y. Submission of a building project should include: glossy 8" x 10" photos of building or rendering; prints of publication-type plans; a brief description of the project covering salient features; and a list of product names and manufacturers and general and principal subcontractors, if possible.

NYC ZONING LECTURES

To accommodate those who were unable to attend last year, the Planning Department of the School of Architecture, Pratt Institute, will again present a series of six technical lectures on New York City's New Zoning Resolution. These lectures, open to architects, engineers, city planners, attorneys, realtors, builders, and others interested in building construction and investment, will take place at a central Manhattan location (to be announced) on six consecutive Wednesdays, starting April 4, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Speakers will include Jack C. Smith, Chief, Office of Master Planning; Mrs. Donald Monson, Director of Research, New York City Department of Planning; Milard Humstone, Senior Planner, New York City Department of Planning; and Prof. George M. Raymond, Chairman, Planning Department, Pratt Institute.

Members interested in these lectures should register immediately with The Department of Planning, School of Architecture, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn 5, New York. Registration fee is \$30.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Hospital and Health

With the encouragement of the Health Research Council of the City of New York, the Chapter has applied for a research grant of \$31,000 for the preparation of an index of Hospital Codes and Regulatory Agencies. The Public Agencies Sub-Committee of the Hospital and Health Committee, under the chairmanship of Armand Burgun, has been working on such an index, but due to the complexity of the problem it has been found that the work could not be expected to be completed within a reasonable time by the volunteer work of committee members.

The aim of the project is to develop a comprehensive index of hospital codes and regulations governing all hospital and related medical facilities in New York, regardless of auspices. Emphasis will be placed on defining areas of jurisdiction, spotlighting conflicts and inconsistencies in the rules, and listing of all filing requirements, names of agencies, addresses, etc. When completed, the index will be made available to all at a nominal charge.

World's Fair

Under the chairmanship of Samuel M. Kurtz, the committee has been studying the possibilities for Chapter participation in the Fair. All plans will be coordinated with the World's Fair Committee of the State Association, of which Mr. Kurtz is a member, and efforts will be made to encourage the participation of the national organization.

Projects now being considered include a program of awards for outstanding buildings or features and a "Reception Center for the Building Design Professions," which might be located in one of the "common use" buildings housing exhibits of construction products. Such a center could provide orientation for visiting architects on features of interest to them at the Fair and in the New York area. Some means might also be developed for pointing out to the public certain examples of distinguished design at the Fair, explaining them, and identifying them with their architects or designers. The possibility of an exhibit of architectural work does not appear fea-

sible; the difficulties of selecting material and the amount of space required were cited against it.

Office Practice

The committee is continuing its discussion of possible revisions to the Handbook of Professional Practice, initiated at the request of Daniel Schwartzman, chairman of the national AIA Professional Practice Committee. The possibility of drafting typical Supplementary General Conditions was considered at a recent meeting. The committee rejected it, however, concluding that any items that could be standardized should be incorporated in the General Conditions. The committee will work instead on a checklist of supplementary items to be considered.

Richard Roth has proposed, as an addition to the many problems now under study by the committee, that it take up the question of expenses attributable to overhead. He is preparing a checklist for use in establishing uniform practices among offices.

John Dixon, Robert Djerejian

MEMBERSHIP

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The New York Chapter extends its warmest welcome to the following new members:

Corporate

Lawrence S. Braverman	Matthew L. Przystup
Anna M. Halpin	Stephen W. Stachurski
Allan Labie	Irving F. Sokol
Barry E. Oberlander	

Associate

John Choi	Jack Freimor
Mario DiValmarana	Michael R. Santero
Edward M. Dweck	Jules Seiden
Robert G. Dyck	Myron S. Sigal
Louis A. Ercolano	Heino Tammerk

CANDIDATES

Information regarding the qualifications of the following candidates for membership will be considered confidential by the Admissions Committee:

Corporate

Allen Nathanson	Edwin Eaton Fairfield
William H. Crow	James Stephan Rossant

Associate

	<i>Sponsors:</i>
James Thompson Burns, Jr.	Burton H. Holmes
John J. Loftus	Thomas H. Creighton
Alexander N. Loisos	Joseph A. Murphy
	Gilbert A. Seltzer
	Vincent Pellegrino
	John M. Kokkins

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Stephen M. Olko

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