

# OCULUS

NEW YORK CHAPTER AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS



JUNE 1963

## N.Y. CIVIC ARCHITECTURE: ALL RIGHT, BOYS, WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

In the past few weeks, New York has witnessed one of the hottest architectural battles in recent years. The forces of Good and Evil have raged joyously across the columns of the *Times* and *Trib*, and the AIA itself is engaged in an old-fashioned family brawl.

The fracas started, of course, with the City Club's new Bard Non-Award contest, which reviewed 24 public buildings and decided none were worth recognition.

Facing the ensuing uproar, the Chapter's Executive Committee replied through its member, Simon Breines. The "fruitless search for excellence," said Breines, was in fact a slipshod and misleading review of less than 10 per cent of the 300-odd buildings actually eligible, submitted only by those architects aware of it and willing to prepare a presentation and pay an entrance fee. "The impression given—and accepted," he said, "was that a selective process had been used to narrow down the field to 24 . . . actually this haphazard sampling resulted in a hoax . . ."

Breines also pointed to the steady, if less spectacular, progress being made by Chapter advisory committees and city agencies such as the Board of Education and the Housing Authority toward getting talented architects for city jobs.

The last sally, at this writing, was a rebuttal signed by 42 Chapter members which called the Executive Committee position a "defensive whitewash" unrepresentative of the views of the Chapter at large, and charged "the political system" with "architecture by default."

So architecture is finally front-page news. It is also the subject of heated feelings in the Chapter, the result, perhaps of a lack of communication between its parts. It is equally obvious, with the public leaping to its own conclusions, that the time has come to turn acrimony into profitable debate, with action rather than headlines as a goal.

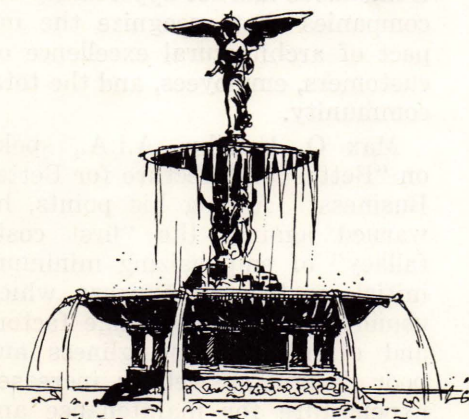
If the Chapter so desires, then, let an exhibit of public architecture be held as suggested, so people can judge just how good and how bad

it is; but let it not be "loaded", and make it instructive of city planning and future projects as well.

Let the issue also become an opportunity to urge the newspapers again, as the Bard report suggests, to follow sensation with more, *regular* news and informed criticism of urban design, that people may know how to judge.

And—looking around at the sorry bulk of municipal building as true of other cities as New York—let the best features of the Bard findings be made the subject of discussion and action in the AIA itself: that panels of eminent architects take an increasing rôle of advice and review in public work; that real design competitions be held to bring fresh thinking into major civic jobs; that bureaucratic processes be streamlined and fees reexamined to attract the best work; that civic awards be revised and continued; and that city officials themselves lead in the huge task of making New York finer than it is.—O.T.

## NEW YORK LANDMARKS—No. 4: FAVORITE FOUNTAINS



betnesda

One of the joys of the city, especially in summer, is its treasury of sparkling fountains, which were celebrated last month in a slim pamphlet-guide issued by The Park Association of New York City. Compiled by E. Powis Jones and illustrated with delightful pen-and-ink sketches by Chapter Member Walker O. Cain, an officer of the association, the guide briefly describes 27 of the most artistic and unusual fountains in the five boroughs.

In Manhattan, the guide lists these fountains as outstanding:

**Bear and Fawn Fountain** in Morningside Park at 114th Street. This fountain, given to the children of New York City, depicts a fawn hiding under a rock above which a bear is crouching.

**Firemen's Memorial** in Riverside Park at 100th Street. This fountain of granite and marble depicts the sacrifices of the City's fire fighters and their widows.

**Straus Memorial Fountain** at Broadway and 106th Street. The bronze female figure of Memory gazes into a pool fed from a lion's mouth.

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# OCULUS

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AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS  
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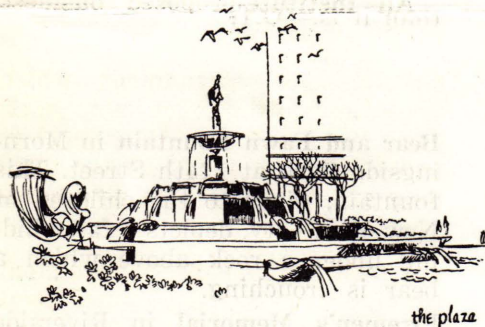
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**Boat Basin Fountain** at 79th Street and West Side Highway. A modern large jet fountain in the circular drive to the Boat Basin in the Hudson River.

**Hamilton Fountain** in Riverside Park at 76th Street. A graceful, shell-shaped granite basin fed from a dolphin's head, surmounted by a huge stone eagle with outspread wings.

**Conservatory Garden Fountain** in Central Park at 104th Street. A modern fountain set in a handsome section of Central Park.

**Bethesda Fountain** in Central Park, at the Esplanade. This winged figure by Emma Stebbins was an important part of the original design for Central Park, and is now the symbol of the Park Association.

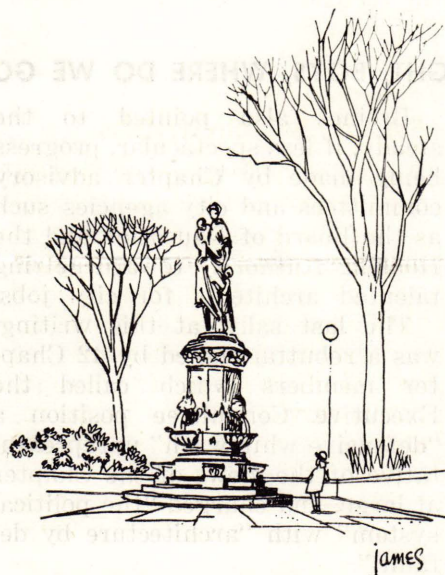


**Pulitzer Memorial Fountain** at Fifth Avenue and 59th Street (the Plaza). This lovely limestone fountain has six separate basins rising up toward the Karl Bitter bronze figure at its peak.

**Lowell Memorial Fountain** in Bryant Park. This graceful granite fountain behind the Public Library

has a 32-foot lower basin and 13-foot upper one from which water flows each summer. Designed by Charles A. Platt.

**Spray Fountain** in Madison Square. This simple and refreshing fountain is 25 feet in diameter, and provides pleasure for thousands of workers in the area who visit Madison Square during lunch hour.



**James Fountain** in Union Square at 15th Street and Broadway. This fine group of figures includes ornaments of bugs and lizards.

**Washington Square Fountain** below Washington Arch at the foot of Fifth Avenue. This huge circular basin with its granite coping has become a Sunday gathering place for folk singers.

**General Slocum Disaster Memorial Fountain** in Tompkins Square, Avenue B and 10th Street. A shaft of pink marble above an ornamental basin with a bas-relief showing two children watching a distant steamboat records the grief of the community after the fateful outing of June 15, 1904.

**Jacob H. Schiff Fountain** in Seward Park. This lovely ornamental fountain of bronze and grey granite no longer functions, but ironically still carries the inscription: "And there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink—Exodus."

**Wireless Operators' Fountain** in Battery Park. This low granite basin was erected in memory of wireless operators who were lost at sea while performing their duties.

Also worth noting, the Park Association points out, are such newer

fountains as the pool at the Corn-ing Glass Building, Prometheus at Rockefeller Center, and the spray pools at the Seagram and Time-Life buildings; as well as fountains which it lists in the other boroughs.

Concludes the guide: "Today's renewal of interest in parks and outdoor art, combined with radical advances in fountain engineering and lighting, has brought about a new popularity for park fountains. It is hoped that this development will lead to a restoration of the city's many beautiful fountains to operating condition for the increased enjoyment of all who use and visit our parks."

## AMA HEARS ABOUT DESIGN

"Better Design for Better Business" was the theme of the American Management Association's First National Design Conference, held May 15-17 at the Roosevelt Hotel. The purpose of the conference was to explore how good design can be developed and used as a major means of consumer motivation. Speakers included manufacturers, industrial designers, economists, merchants, educators, architects, and interior designers.

Although the emphasis was on better product design, the meeting also considered the need for better architectural design under the topic, "Ugliness is Costly." Richard W. Snibbe, A.I.A. was moderator and Morris Ketchum Jr., and Walker Cain were panelists. Reasons for America's shortcomings in architectural design were discussed, along with the replacement of the old with the new. It was pointed out to the executives that there is a tremendous market opportunity for companies that recognize the impact of architectural excellence on customers, employees, and the total community.

Max O. Urbahn, A.I.A., spoke on "Better Architecture for Better Business." Among his points, he warned against the "first costs fallacy" of emphasizing minimum initial construction expense, which usually ignores long-range factors and often leads to ugliness and poor design, as well as increased expenditure for maintenance and for future improvement.

Marietta Meyers



## CHAPTER DUES INCREASED

To meet increased activities and costs of operation, the Executive Committee earlier this year recommended that Chapter dues be raised from \$36 to \$43 per annum for third-year corporate members. This increase of 20 per cent, sanctioned by Chapter bylaws, was passed without discussion at the last regular meeting of the Chapter on June 5.

In asking the rise, the Committee pointed to a debit of \$4,360 in 1962, despite "sustaining firm" contributions, which appear to have reached a maximum of some \$13,000 out of a total budget of nearly \$74,000 (up from \$52,000 in 1960). The Committee also cited an increased exposure to the public, greater activity and expense on the part of the headquarters staff, and larger postage costs, plus the need for setting aside some money for suitable new headquarters. Chapter membership now stands at 1,320. As a matter of interest, the Committee points out that dues in at least two dozen other Chapters exceed the new rate, ranging from \$44 in Oregon and \$45 in New Jersey, to \$65 in Arkansas, \$90 in Florida North, and \$120 in Mississippi.

## NIAE AWARDS PARIS PRIZE

The National Institute for Architectural Education has awarded its annual \$5000 Lloyd Warren Fellowship, 50th Paris Prize in Architecture to Thomas Jon Rosengren of the University of Illinois. The First Alternate is Robert L. Wright, also of the University of Illinois.

Subject of the competition, which drew 534 entries, was "A University for Diplomatic Study".

The Jury of Award, chaired by Caleb Hornbostel and Sidney L. Katz, included David Ardito, Martin L. Beck, Joseph J. Caponnetto, Giorgio Cavaglieri, Allen R. Congdon, Arthur S. Douglass, Jr., Percival Goodman, Abe Geller, Robert Guss, Joseph Judge, Gillet Lefferts, Jr., L. Bancel LaFarge, Joseph J. Oshiver, Hugh Romney, Ben Schlanger, Daniel & John Schwartzman, and Richard E. Zegler.

## CHAPTER PRESENTS GRANTS TO SIX N.Y.C. STUDENTS

Seven scholarships for the study of architecture were presented this month by the New York Chapter at a luncheon held at Chapter headquarters.

Dennis Edward Heitner, of 224 Windsor Road, Staten Island, was the recipient of the \$1,000 scholarship award of the Plastering Insti-

### F.A.I.A. NOMINATIONS

Walter H. Kilham, Chairman of the Committee on Fellows, would be glad to receive the names of members who their colleagues feel are worthy of advancement to Fellowship in the Institute.

Fellowship can be conferred on AIA members for design, public service, service to the Institute, or literature, or a combination.

Please write your nomination, category, and reasons in a letter to the Chairman, c/o Chapter Office, 115 East 40th St., N.Y. 16.

tute of Greater New York. The award, administered by the Chapter's Education and Scholarship Committee, is presented annually to a worthy high school student. The son of Rev. and Mrs. Donald H. Heitner, Dennis attends Curtis High School and plans to begin his architectural studies at the University of Michigan in the fall.

In addition, six scholarship awards totalling \$3,900 were presented by Morris Ketchum Jr., F.A.I.A., on behalf of the American Institute of Architects and its Foundation. Recipients were Barry Elbasani and Theodore Kvell of Cooper Union, and Frank O. Elliott, Donald W. MacDonald, and Allen F. Terry of Columbia.

The awards to Messrs. Kvell and Elliott were made possible by a direct grant to the Foundation by The Ruberoid Company. Mr. Elbasani's came through a grant by Blumcraft of Pittsburgh. A second scholarship to Mr. Kvell and those presented to Messrs. MacDonald and Terry were from endowments established through bequests to the A.I.A. Foundation.

## THE 1963 MIAMI CONVENTION—From the N.Y. Chapter's View

Well planned and organized, supported by fine weather and a full Miami moon, the recent national convention of the AIA was enjoyable, worthwhile, and generally successful.

Early meetings with other Chapter Presidents, the Octagon staff, and the Resolutions Committee found your President and Executive Secretary laying the necessary ground work for Chapter action to be brought before the main business session. The New York Chapter, permitted 67 Delegates, had 45 registered; a Chapter caucus was conducted with particular attention to the Judiciary Procedure Amendment, Public Housing, and World's Fair resolutions proposed by the Chapter at the pre-convention meeting April 16.

The business session, exceptionally well chaired by President-Elect J. Roy Carroll, Jr., gave immediate approval to a By-Law addition entitling the president of a

Chapter to cast the votes of delegates not present during a roll-call vote. (This sternly tested the dedication of Chapter delegates, but not one turned into a "pool-side" legislator.)

All Institute-proposed business passed, including:

♦ A By-Law amendment which gives the Board permission to mortgage the Institute's Headquarters and Library to facilitate the planning and financing of a new headquarters building.

♦ A New York Chapter amendment to the Board's proposed amendment on judiciary procedure, providing greater safeguards in disciplinary proceedings.

♦ Termination of corporate membership "without prejudice" for those corporate members who leave the profession of architecture to enter the field of construction.



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The Committee on Resolutions reported as follows on other Chapter proposals:

♦ The Public Housing resolution was transmitted to the Institute's Board of Directors with the consent of the Chapter for recognition by the Board as may be consistent with its policy.

♦ The World's Fair resolution submitted jointly with the New York State Association of Architects was withdrawn and a letter from the NYSAA President was submitted to the Board of Directors, asking their consideration of this representation and a review by the Design and Public Affairs Committees of the Institute.

An interesting proposal to remove the U. S. citizenship requirement for corporate membership was unfortunately ruled out of order under the interpretation of Institute By-Laws, and is to be brought before the next convention.

Elected as the Institute's new officers were J. Roy Carroll, Jr., President; Arthur Gould Odell, Jr., First Vice President (President Elect); Wayne S. Hertzka, Second Vice President; Robert F. Hastings, Treasurer.

In seconding the nomination of Mr. Odell, President Lawford pointed to the new importance of this post, and to the qualifications needed to fill it. He said that Mr. Odell met them all and many more as well.

The program on "Quality in Architecture," effectively chaired by Cornell Dean Burnham Kelly, was outstanding. Especially noteworthy were Robert Anshen's comments on how we practice "Architectural Segregation," Anthropologist Dr. Edward T. Hall's "Personnel Distance" and its relation to architects, and Art Critic George McCue's warning that "Architects May Be Left To Preside Over Their Own Funeral." (for texts, see the *AIA Journal*).

*C. Gates Beckwith, Secretary*

## NYSAA CONVENTION Oct. 20-23

The 1963 Convention of the New York State Association of Architects will be held from October 20-23, 1963 at Grossinger's, Grossinger, N. Y. The theme of the meeting will be "The Efficient Architectural Office." The New York Society of Architects will be host this year, with William Lukacs acting as Convention Chairman. As usual, the New York Chapter, A.I.A. will hold a Pre-Convention Luncheon in late September to discuss business and proposals to be taken up at the convention.

## MEMBERSHIP

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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

#### Corporate

Frederick M. Ginsberg

#### Associate

Tamas J. Belanyi  
Harold T. Graves III  
Walter J. Johnson

William C. Shopsis  
Albert M. Simon

### CANDIDATES

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

#### Corporate

Saul Stewart Anton  
Mario Vittorio Dini  
A. Corwin Frost  
Augusto R. Gautier

Richard S. Hertzberg  
Manfred Hansjoachim Riedel  
Nicholas Joseph Senesey  
Nathan Silver

#### Associate

Neill Alexander Byrne  
C. Del Monte Funnay  
S. Igor Jacusko  
Ronald Jensen Kiaer  
Raymond C. Sancho  
John B. Schwartzman  
Robert W. Spadafora  
Joseph Spanik  
Allan Thaler  
George F. Tiedemann  
Guy H. Webster

Sponsors:  
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Sponsors:  
Isaiah Ehrlich and John L. Wilson  
Sponsors:  
George S. Holderness and Allen R. Congdon  
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David L. Eggers and Theodore Y. Young  
Sponsors:  
H. Creighton Jones and Marvin H. Mills  
Sponsors:  
Alan Burnham and Burton H. Holmes  
Allen R. Congdon and George H. Buterbaugh  
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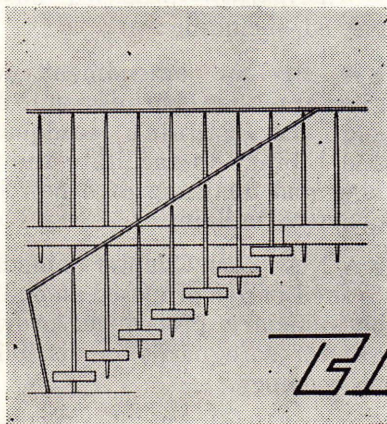
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