Grand Hyatt Hotel. Architects: Der Scutt and Grussen & Partners.
George Lewis

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A large turnout of the Corporate Architects Committee — architects employed by corporations — met at Chairman Corwin Frost's office, CBS Facilities Engineering, of which he is Associate Director.

St. Bartholomew's: At this writing it is only known that sale of the south garden and community house is being considered by the vestry. The Chapter is watching closely.

Architectural Archives
The Committee on the Preservation of Architectural Records/COPAR, formerly located on Gramercy Park, has turned its national work over to the Library of Congress and in the process on re-grouping, NY/COPAR will address itself to local and state-wide matters. The identification, collection, reorganization and conservation of written and graphic architectural records remain a primary concern. The Committee, headed by Catha Grace Rambusch, meet at Chapter Headquarters Wednesday, December 17, 5:30 to 7:30. New members are welcome: do come.

The following have made this presentation possible through the generosity of their companies:

Mr. Wilson was born in 1898 in Meridian, Mississippi and very early in his life determined to be an architect. He worked his way through Columbia University School of Architecture doing a variety of jobs and graduated in 1928, becoming a registered architect in 1930. In 1935 he was appointed a member of the group of associated architects for the design of Harlem River Houses, which in 1975 was officially declared an historic landmark and which to this day is considered the finest example of public housing in the United States.

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TUESDAY 16

TUESDAY 23

TUESDAY 30
EZRA STOLLER PHOTOGRAPHS OF ARCHITECTURE 1939-1980
Beginning with Stoller's early assignments to photograph Alvar Aalto's Finnish Pavilion at the 1939 World's Fair, and photographs of projects by Le Corbusier, Marcel Breuer, among others.

ROMALDO GIURGOLA

LANDSCAPE SKETCHES
Landscapes and architectural drawings by Lawrence Halprin.

PHILIP TRAGER AND CHARLES PRATT: PHOTOGRAPHS (1926-76)
New York architecture including ten studies and details of Harlem houses, the Guggenheim Museum, and the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. Tower by Philip Trager. Also photographs of gardens by Charles Pratt.

FILM POSTERS OF THE RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE 1925-1931
The posters reflect the aesthetic challenge and the ideological tumult of the 1920's in Russia. An important collection in excellent condition.

BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNISM
American architectural drawings from the National Academy of design. Twenty four drawings from 1885 to 1930, by McKim, Mead, Carrere, Saarinen, Delano, and others.

FROM MATISSE TO AMERICAN ABSTRACT PAINTING
In the years after World War II, when American optimism about modern architecture was at its zenith, architectural photography assumed a new importance. Photographs were no longer simply records of built facts, or even poetic interpretations. They became missionary tracts published into the world, teaching the people the demanding but redemptive art of looking at modern buildings. Soon architects and editors alike understood that persuasion by photography could be guaranteed if entrusted to Ezra Stoller. A building placed under the protection of his camera was known to have been "stollerized", as the architect himself might have been baptized; and with the same consequent sanctification. Human error fell away.

The age of innocence has passed, once again, and yet Stoller’s photographs are still beautiful, and sometimes so persuasive as to seem definitive. How does he do it? His personal history does not explain his gift, although it does differ in some respects from that of most of his professional peers. Stoller was trained as an architect, in Lloyd Morgan’s New York University atelier overlooking Bryant Park. To earn some spare cash he began to make lantern slides; then someone saw him carrying his big Butcher Pressman ($15 second hand in 1936) and he was asked to photograph architectural models and drawings, and then sculpture for the class taught by Rene Chambellan. When Chambellan completed his sculptures for the Rockefeller Center mall he asked Stoller to photograph them, and these pictures were widely published. The New York World’s Fair of 1939 provided a rare opportunity at a time when the Depression still blocked architectural work, and photography had already begun to absorb all his attention. His “study” was suddenly made more self-conscious through a book of photographs by Eugene Atget—a gift from his wife, Helen, herself an artist.

Ezra Stoller’s photographs are now a part of history of modern architecture in the United States. If he made some buildings look a little better than they were, the improvement provided an image for aspiring architects. For better or worse, his photographs have been more real to architectural students, and more intensely experienced, than most of the buildings they memorialize. Their instrumental value in spreading the good word may now yield to their more durable value as art.
"Temple, Tombs, and Angels: Tops of Buildings in Lower Manhattan," an exhibition of photographs, elevations, plans, and models of top of buildings in Lower Manhattan, will be on view at the Downtown Branch of the Whitney Museum of American Art from November 19 through December 31. In conjunction with the exhibition, a series of special tours will be conducted from high vantage points. Represented in the exhibition are the Greek polychromed temple on the roof of the National City Company Building at 52 Wall Street, the Egyptian stepped pyramid atop the Banker’s Trust Building at 16 Wall Street, the Gothic-revival ornamentation of the Woolworth Building, and the Art Deco gargoyles of the First National City Bank at 20 Exchange Place. Also included are the Renaissance tempioettio and statue of Civic Fame on the Municipal Building, Cunard Building’s nereids (nymphs on serpent-tailed horses), the Greek-derived tripod or olive oil burner on the former Standard Oil Building at 26 Broadway, A.T. & T.’s angel, the Spirit of Communication (now removed from the building at Fulton and Broadway), and the World War I biplane on the roof of 77 Water Street.

As New York architects became more comfortable with steel-frame construction, they were able to meet the demands of rivalrous businessmen who sought to dominate the skyline through ever-higher buildings. These skyscrapers in New York’s financial district are topped with a brilliant profusion of forms borrowed from historical periods as diverse as ancient Egypt and the Italian Renaissance—all but invisible to the pedestrian. The exhibition explores this ornamentation in the period of its efflorescence from 1900 to 1930, with some later examples dating after the hiatus in construction caused by the Great Depression and World War II. Photographs of upper stories and their decorative details offer the opportunity to appreciate the variety of design and ornament used to meet the challenge of capping skyscrapers prior to the emergence of the International Style which brought the absence of ornament into vogue.

"... but it is only in Manhattan, where masonry is so tightly packed that it seems to explode into the sky, that the true soul of our City resides. It is possible to imagine the other metropolises, but Manhattan could be only what it is and where it is.”

Louis Auchincloss

The Museum of the City of New York will present "New York Now: Photographs by Philip Trager" on December 16, 1980. The exhibition is composed of fifty black and white photographs of Manhattan architecture. These photographs are part of the Museum of the City of New York’s extensive photographic collections.

Philip Trager is a lover of buildings. His subjects include sections of buildings, overall views, street scenes and skyscrapers. Trager has eliminated the intimate detail in his work—people rarely intrude on his scenes. His focus is on the architecture. He can isolate a building’s “personality” and to some extent create that essence, simply by framing what he likes best. These are very calculated, very deliberate compositions.

Philip Trager, a lawyer by profession, took these photographs with 4 x 5 and 11 x 14 view cameras.

The exhibition "New York Now: Photographs by Philip Trager" will remain on view through March 1, 1981 in the Print and Photograph Gallery on the ground floor of the Museum.

A book of Philip Trager’s work, entitled Philip Trager: New York, with a foreword by Louis Auchincloss, President of the Museum of the City of New York, is available at the Museum. It includes eighty-eight photographs.
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Volume 42, Number 3 December 1980

Editor: Andrew P. MacNair
Managing Editor: Alexandra S. Morphet
Editorial Assistant: Laura Bell
Calendar: William Etter

The New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects
The Urban Center, 457 Madison Avenue,
New York, New York 10022
George S. Lewis, Executive Director
Executive Committee 1980-81
John Belle, President
Joseph Wasserman, First Vice President
Ticjan Papachristou, Vice President
Robert Siegel, Vice President
Alan Schwartzman, Secretary
Ralph Steinglass, Treasurer
William Ellis
Frank Eliseo
Theodore Liebman
Frank Munzer
Lee H. Pomeroy
Bart Voorsanger
NYC/AIA Staff
Katherine Piesla
Angel Betancourt
Carol Jones
Julie Lake

The Grand Hyatt Hotel:
Perhaps one of the most intriguing urban spaces to undergo major adjustments and revisions—through the insertion of reflective glass walls between the old Commodore Hotel and Grand Central Station, The Bowery Savings Bank and The Chrysler Building—has finally been completed with the opening of the Grand Hyatt New York Hotel. Designed by Gruzen and Partners with Der Scutt as consulting architect, the unusual reflections of the major neighboring monuments has become one of the most truly liberating achievements of a once depressed urban space in New York. The idea of covering the old masonry surface of the Commodore Hotel with a reflecting glass wall has totally de-materialized its ordinary facade into a cascade of dynamic architecture as one passes along 42nd Street. The usual chaos of the intersection of Park Avenue at 42nd Street has been alleviated by the new glass block walls of the Grand Hyatt Hotel. Now the intersection only needs the completion of the Phillip Morris Headquarters by Ulrich Franzen and Associates.

Wesley
The Executive Committee has been debating whether or not to reaffirm the Chapter's 1976 position supporting Wesway. This highly complex and emotional issue divided Chapter members then and is doing so now, and when Mayor Koch invited answers to five questions to help him reconsider his own position, the Executive Committee elected to take the subject up. At an open meeting November 6 various panelists presented the case pro and con, and there was an explanation of an alternate, less extensive proposal, "River Road," developed on their own by chapter members John Belle and Paul Willen.

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John Louis Wilson

James Domar

On Monday evening December 1, 1980 at 6:00 P.M. the New York Coalition of Black Architects is sponsoring a tribute to Architect John Louis Wilson, FAIA, on the occasion of his fifty years in Architecture, for the benefit of a scholarship fund for minority students of architecture. The tribute and retrospective exhibition of his work will be held at Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture and Planning. 414 Hall, Wood Auditorium West 116th Street and Broadway.

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DECEMBER 1980

OCULUS

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NEW YORK NOW: PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP TRAGER

TUESDAY 23

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<td><strong>Romaldo Giurgola</strong>&lt;br&gt;Opening of the exhibit&lt;br&gt;The Architectural League, The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave., 6:30 pm. Non-members $5.00. Reservations: 753-1722.</td>
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<td><strong>The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces</strong>&lt;br&gt;A Film.&lt;br&gt;The Architectural League, The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave., 12:30, 5:30 and 7:00 pm., 935-3690. Dec. 10.</td>
<td><strong>David Van Zanten Lecture</strong>&lt;br&gt;“Gothic and Conviction”. The last in the series “Beaux-Arts Gothic: Medievalism in America after 1900.” Columbia University, Avery Hall, 116th St. and Broadway, 6:00 pm., 580-3510. Dec. 11.</td>
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<td><strong>Friday 12</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Landscape Sketches</strong>&lt;br&gt;Landscapes and architectural drawings by Lawrence Halprin.&lt;br&gt;Spaced Gallery, 165 W. 72nd St., 787-6350. Through Dec. 13.</td>
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In the years after World War II, when American optimism about modern architecture was at its zenith, architectural photography assumed a new importance. Photographs were no longer simply records of built facts, or even poetic interpretations. They became missionary tracts published into the world, teaching the people the demanding but redemptive art of looking at modern buildings. Soon architects and editors alike understood that persuasion by photography could be guaranteed if entrusted to Ezra Stoller. A building placed under the protection of his camera was known to have been "stollerized", as the architect himself might have been baptized; and with the same consequent sanctification. Human error fell away.

The age of innocence has passed, once again, and yet Stoller's photographs are still beautiful, and sometimes so persuasive as to seem definitive. How does he do it? His personal history does not explain his gift, although it does differ in some respects from that of most of his professional peers.

Ezra Stoller was trained as an architect, in Lloyd Morgan's New York University atelier overlooking Bryant Park. To earn some spare cash he began to make lantern slides; then someone saw him carrying his big Butcher British Pressman ($15 second hand in 1936) and he was asked to photograph architectural models and drawings, and then sculpture for the class taught by Rene Chambellan. When Chambellan completed his sculptures for the Rockefeller Center mall he asked Stoller to photograph them, and these pictures were widely published. The New York World's Fair of 1939 provided a rare opportunity at a time when the Depression still blocked architectural work, and photography had already begun to absorb all his attention. His "study" was suddenly made more self-conscious through a book of photographs by Eugene Atget—a gift from his wife, Helen, herself an artist.

Ezra Stoller's photographs are now a part of history of modern architecture in the United States. If he made some buildings look a little better than they were, the improvement provided an image for aspiring architects. For better or worse, his photographs have been more real to architectural students, and more intensely experienced, than most of the buildings they memorialize. Their instrumental value in spreading the good word may now yield to their more durable value as art.
"Temles, Tombs, and Angels: Tops of Buildings in Lower Manhattan," an exhibition of photographs, elevations, plans, and models of top of buildings in Lower Manhattan, will be on view at the Downtown Branch of the Whitney Museum of American Art from November 19 through December 31. In conjunction with the exhibition, a series of special tours will be conducted from high vantage points. Represented in the exhibition are the Greek polychromed temple on the roof of the National City Company Building at 52 Wall Street, the Egyptian stepped pyramid atop the Bankers Trust Building at 16 Wall Street, the Gothic-revival ornamentation of the Woolworth Building, and the Art Deco gargoyles of the First National City Bank at 20 Exchange Place. Also included are the Renaissance tempietto and statue of Civic Fame on the Municipal Building, Cunard Building's nereids (nymphs on serpent-tailed horses), the Greek-derived tripod or olive oil burner on the former Standard Oil Building at 26 Broadway, A.T.& T's angel, the Spirit of Communication (now removed from the building at Fulton and Broadway), and the World War I biplane on the roof of 77 Water Street.

As New York architects became more comfortable with steel-frame construction, they were able to meet the demands of rivalrous businessmen who sought to dominate the skyline through ever-higher buildings. These skyscrapers in New York's financial district are topped with a brilliant profusion of forms borrowed from historical periods as diverse as ancient Egypt and the Italian Renaissance—all but invisible to the pedestrian. The exhibition explores this ornamentation in the period of its efflorescence from 1900 to 1930, with some later examples dating after the hiatus in construction caused by the Great Depression and World War II. Photographs of upper stories and their decorative details offer the opportunity to appreciate the variety of design and ornament used to meet the challenge of capping skyscrapers prior to the emergence of the International Style which brought the absence of ornament into vogue.

...but it is only in Manhattan, where masonry is so tightly packed that it seems to explode into the sky, that the true soul of our City resides. It is possible to imagine the other metropolises, but Manhattan could be only what it is and where it is." Louis Auchincloss

The Museum of the City of New York will present "New York Now: Photographs by Philip Trager" on December 16, 1980. The exhibition is composed of fifty black and white photographs of Manhattan architecture. These photographs are part of the Museum of the City of New York's extensive photographic collections.

Philip Trager is a lover of buildings. His subjects include sections of buildings, overall views, street scenes and skyscrapers. Trager has eliminated the intimate detail in his work—people rarely intrude on his scenes. His focus is on the architecture. He can isolate a building's "personality" and to some extent create that essence, simply by framing what he likes best. These are very calculated, very deliberate compositions.

Philip Trager, a lawyer by profession, took these photographs with 4 x 5 and 11 x 14 view cameras.

The exhibition "New York Now: Photographs by Philip Trager" will remain on view through March 1, 1981 in the Print and Photograph Gallery on the ground floor of the Museum.

A book of Philip Trager's work, entitled Philip Trager: New York, with a foreward by Louis Auchincloss, President of the Museum of the City of New York, is available at the Museum. It includes eighty-eight photographs.