

Oculus

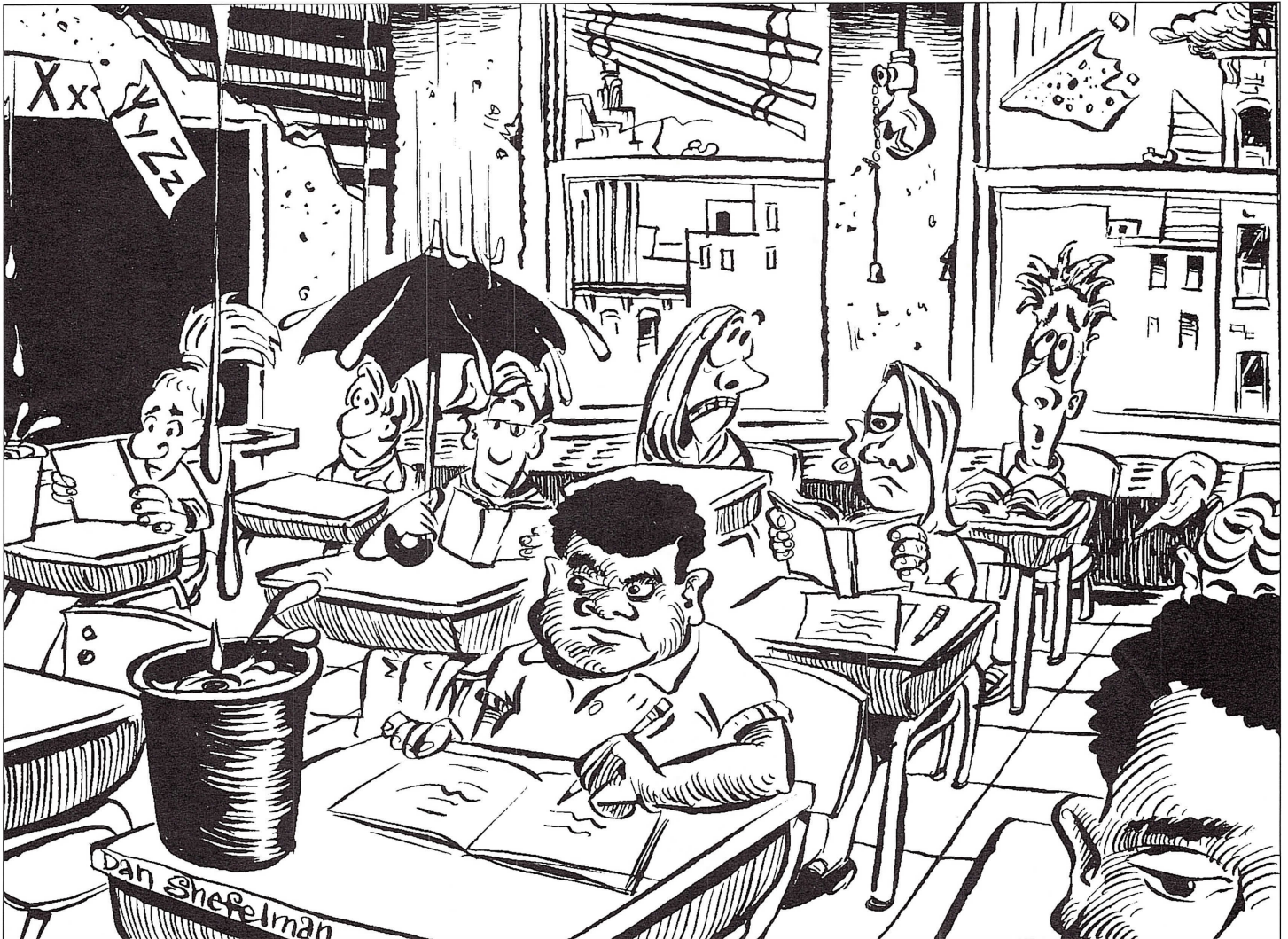
an eye on New York Architecture

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New York Chapter

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From the Executive Director...



Carol Clark,
executive director
AIA New York
Chapter

by Carol Clark

Many *Oculus*
readers have
been inquiring
about the
Chapter's
search for a
new editor.
With the
Oculus Search

Committee chair, Denis Glen
Kuhn, FAIA, regaling his colleagues
and the candidates alike with stories
of his tenure as editor in the period
preceding Suzanne Stephens and C.
Ray Smith, a dedicated group is
engaged in careful deliberation. The
good news is that there is a wealth of
talent seeking to fill the prized post
of *Oculus* editor. Some candidates
for the position have allowed that
Suzanne Stephens will be "a tough
act to follow." For her part, Suzanne
reports that she is spending most of
her waking hours in classrooms and
the library, but "Cornell is fine." We
wish her every success.

As many of you know, the acting
Oculus editor is Peter Slatin, who has
served so capably as senior editor
over the past two years. The Chapter
is fortunate that Peter is at the helm,
working with the talented team he
and Suzanne assembled to produce
Oculus.

The Chapter's leadership continues
to articulate a common theme for
the Chapter's efforts in 1994-95.
The focus is on design in the public
realm, broadly interpreted. At
Planning Day on Saturday,
November 5, committee members
will outline programs and ideas for
the coming year. We expect to have
lively discussions and emerge with
an overview of committee programs
and events for 1995. I look forward
to working with the committees and
encourage members to consider
becoming active in one or more of
the committee venues.

The highlight of month will take
place at the Heritage Ball on
November 17, when Bartholomew
Voorsanger, FAIA, will give the AIA

New York Chapter President's
Award to Edward Larrabee Barnes,
FAIA in recognition of his extraordi-
nary contribution to New York
City's architectural practice. The
support the Chapter receives from
the proceeds of the ball is vital.
Barnes has been working with
Chapter staff to identify artists and
other colleagues with whom he has
collaborated. By bringing together
art and architecture in a stellar space
designed by Barnes, we believe the
1994 Heritage Ball will be one to
remember.

Details

by Marcy Stanley

The Chapter's Fellows Committee is
now accepting recommendations for
nominations to the AIA College of
Fellows, a distinction granted for sig-
nificant achievement in design,
preservation, education, literature,
and service. In order to be consid-
ered for fellowship, an architect must
have been a member of the AIA for a
minimum of ten years and have
made significant achievements with-
in the profession.

The committee urges all members to
bring worthy candidates to its atten-
tion. Letters of recommendation
outlining a member's qualifications
should be sent to Carl Stein, FAIA,
Fellows Committee chair, c/o AIA
New York Chapter. Candidates are
reviewed by the committee, which
forwards its selections to the Board.
Those nominated by the Chapter
are asked to submit completed port-
folios to the AIA Fellows Jury for
consideration.

• • •

An open Chapter meeting will be
held on Tuesday, November 22, at
6:00 pm in the boardroom at
Chapter headquarters to create a bal-
lot for the **Nominating Committee
election**. We will also be showing
the award-winning AIA video on
antitrust, *Legal Hardhat Required*. At
this meeting, nominations are taken
only from those members in atten-
dance. If you have someone in mind
for this committee, you must attend

continued on page 14

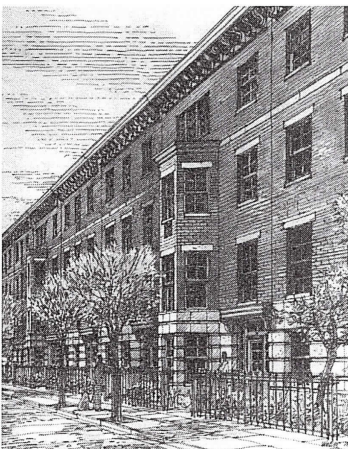
SCOOP

by Susan Doubilet

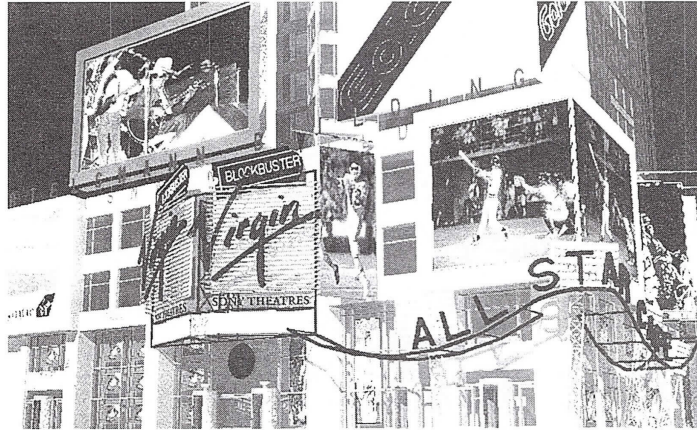
All Around the Town

Groundbreaking took place on September 30 for **Atlantic Center**, a retail and residential development on a 24-acre site in downtown Brooklyn. **Ehrenkrantz & Eckstut Architects** prepared the master plan, and **Swanke Hayden Connell** is the architect for the housing.

The Flatbush Avenue site — designated in the 1950s to become a new Ebbetts Field, had the Dodgers stayed in Brooklyn — stands next to the landmark Williamsburg Savings Bank tower and over the rail and subway lines leading to the Atlantic Terminal. Ten acres will hold 800,000 square feet of retail space, to be built in two phases, slated for completion in 1998; underground parking will be included. Fourteen acres will hold about 400 housing units in 126 attached three-family houses, priced for families earning between \$32,000 and \$53,000. Each house will have an owner-occupied unit and two rental units. The housing will also be built in two phases (phase one is already sold out), to be completed in the spring of 1996. Open spaces are located in both the retail and the "Village" areas. The developer is Atlantic Center Associates, an affiliate of Forest City Ratner Companies, and the overall development is sponsored by the New York City Economic Development Corporation. The affordable housing component is sponsored by the usual complement of city, state, and federal agencies: New York City Partnership,



Atlantic Center, proposed plan



Times Square Center, 1540 Broadway.

the New York City Department of Housing, Preservation, and Development (see "Interview," p.10), the New York State Affordable Housing Corporation, the New York State Mortgage Agency's Mortgage Insurance Fund, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Phase two of the commercial and retail development will proceed under the sponsorship of the New York State Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The project will receive numerous economic incentives, including property tax abatements and housing subsidies....A far glitzier project was announced near another area due to receive public subsidies. Times Square will see an influx of some really big players when a long-empty atrium is opened in 1995. The six-story atrium at 1540 Broadway (at 45th Street) stands at the base of a 44-story SOM skyscraper, a development that has changed hands several times since its beginnings under developer Ian Bruce Eichner in 1987. The building is now owned by the German entertainment conglomerate **Bertelsmann AG**, which uses the tower for many of its U.S. operations. The atrium will soon house a 65,000-square-foot **Virgin Megastore** selling CDs and cassettes, a four-screen, 1,400-seat movie complex to be operated by **Sony Theaters**, and a 35,000-square-foot, **Official All-Star Café**. The café, based on a sports-celebrity theme and developed by the creator of

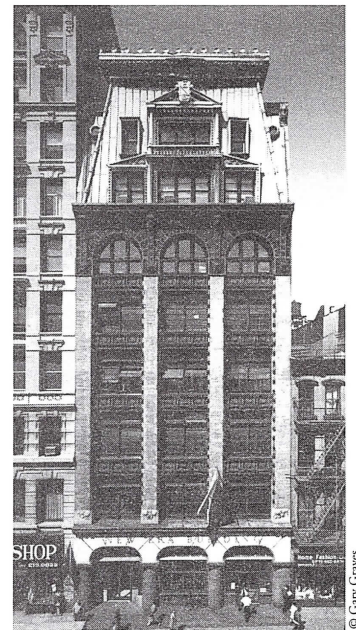


David Rockwell

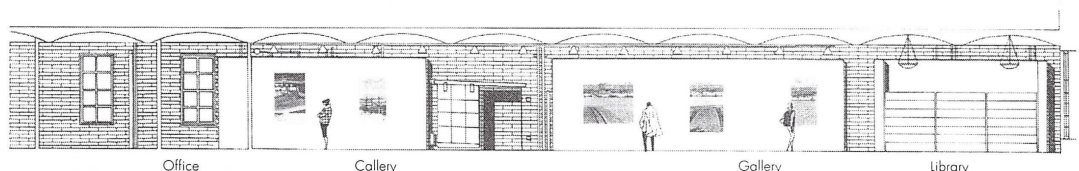
Planet Hollywood, is being designed by the **Rockwell Group**. (David Rockwell, of course,

has been involved in drafting the guidelines for the 42nd Street Redevelopment Project [Oculus, November 1993, p. 10].)... The **Swiss Institute** is moving from its somewhat reclusive location on West 67th Street to the heart of the gallery scene in Soho, namely, to the third floor of the Art Nouveau New Era Building at 495 Broadway. "What truly interests us," declares the Institute's chairman, Johannes M. Frey, "is what happens when we bring our Swiss values into this environment." Not to worry. The street life may be frenetic, but upstairs all is calm. The typical design for Soho galleries — your basic cleaned-up industrial space — shouldn't jar punctilious Swiss sensibilities at all. Architects for the new space, **Pagnamenta Torriani**, are retaining the vaulted plaster ceiling, cast-iron columns, wood floor, industrial sliding door, and much of the exposed brick walls in the 6,500-square-foot space. Office and service facilities will be accommodated, and the major spaces — two galleries and a library — will be interconnected but differentiated by lighting. A corridor

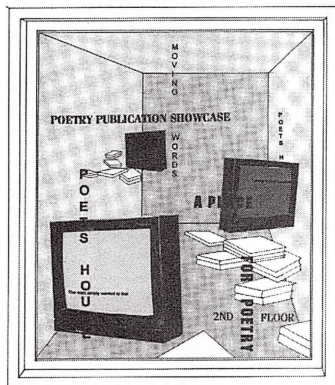
will be transformed into a niche for sculpture or video installations. The opening date for the new quarters is November 18. Lorenzo Pagnamenta and Anna Torriani, who trained at the ETH in Zurich, founded their firm in 1990 after working in this country for about ten years (for **Paul Rudolph**, among others). Current projects include two renovations in Brooklyn for the **New York School Construction Authority** under the mentors program and a rehabilitation of an 1886 town house in the Upper East Side Historic District....If you hurry around the corner after the **Swiss Institute** opening you can still catch a temporary storefront installation for the **Poets House** at 72 Spring Street. The nine-year-old, nonprofit poetry library and learning center, said to hold the largest privately-owned poetry collection in New York City, asked **Louise Braverman**, the architect of its upper-floor, 2,000-square-foot space, to design storefront window space on loan from the ground-floor tenant. The window design includes words statically and kinetically presented on television screens, panels, and the window itself, and announces the **Poets House Publication Showcase**



New Era Building, Soho

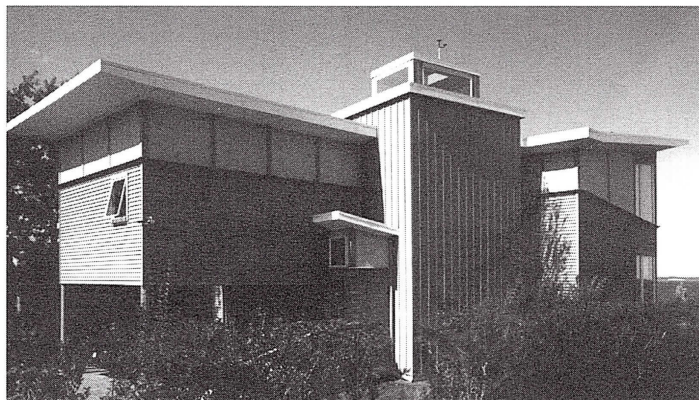


Swiss Institute, Pagnamenta Torriani



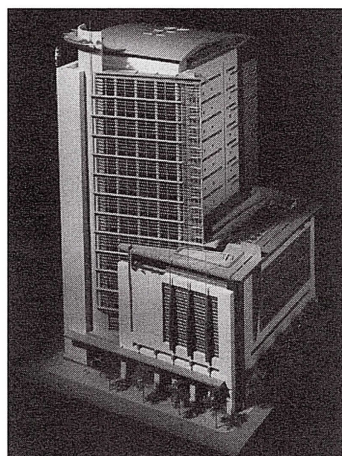
Poets House window installation

and the Poetry and the Internet lecture series. Among Braverman's other recent projects is the 5,000-square-foot C. V. Starr Hand Surgery Center in the SOM-designed St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital addition. The center includes a state-of-the-art conference room and a rare-book library, in addition to offices, examination rooms, and a therapy center. Braverman received a 1994 Archi Award from the AIA Long Island Chapter for a 4,000-square-foot beach house built on existing foundations in Ninevah Beach, a predominantly African-American neighborhood in Sag Harbor....**Jambhekar Strauss, P.C.**, the firm formed a year ago by two Kohn Pedersen Fox alumni, has a number of large-scale projects in progress. The young firm has been selected by the New York State Urban Development Corporation to prepare a redevelopment strategy for the **Pilgrim State Psychiatric Center** property in Brentwood, Long Island. The 1,400-bed center — the only public psychiatric hospital that will remain open on Long Island after others close over the next three years — occupies only 100 of the property's 825 acres. The architects, whose team includes Vollmer Associates for engineering services and Urbanomics for economic analysis, are working on a plan for the use of the remaining land. In addition, Jambhekar Strauss is serving as the urban design specialist on a team planning a reuse strategy for **Stapleton Navy Base** on Staten Island, a victim of the navy base closure program. The team, headed by Wallace Roberts & Todd, was also selected by the New York City Economic Development Corporation. Jambhekar Strauss continues to be



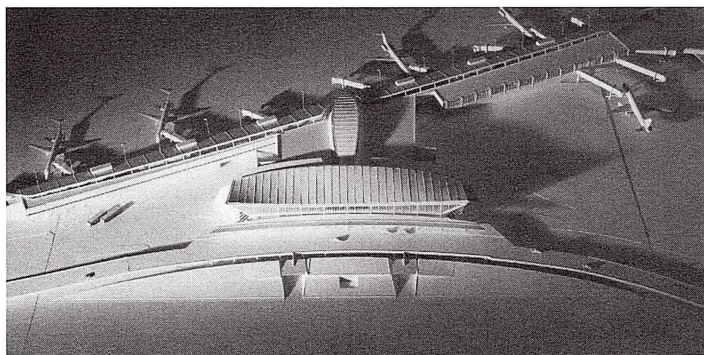
House at Ninevah Beach, Louise Braverman

associated with KPF on other projects, including an invited competition entry for a master plan of a 40-acre site in South Korea. **Daewoo Corporation** is developing the site as a mixed-use complex, with office, retail, residential, and cultural uses. The firm is also doing preliminary work on an art museum in New Delhi for a private collection of Jain art....**Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates** itself is working on a number of projects, among them the three-million-square-foot **Nanjing Xi Lu** office, retail, and residential development on the busiest commercial street in Shanghai's central district. The firm's description of the building is a bit florid: "The curved volumes of the base are cradled by the tower walls, which spiral in ascending fashion to the top of the 60-story tower. At its apex of 300 meters, the complex is punctuated by a lantern formed of billowing screens which will glow at night over the city."...In a more mundane locale, KPF's new **Greater Buffalo International Airport** is designed to evoke the imagery of flight, like a number of predecessors. The ends of the 285,000-square-foot building slope toward its center, so that the "great hall appears to be lifting into flight," as the firm describes it.



U.S. Courthouse, Portland, Kohn Pedersen Fox

For good measure, the imagery of nearby Niagara Falls is brought into the picture by a water feature, part of the landscape design. The terminal is designed for possible expansion, and a hotel development may be added in the future (convenient for snowed-in passengers)....KPF is also designing a **United States Federal Courthouse** building in Portland, Oregon, with a "sidecar" administrative wing that responds to the streetwall height around the adjacent park, and a tower modulated for light, air, and views. In an interesting juxtaposition of clients, the firm is also designing a



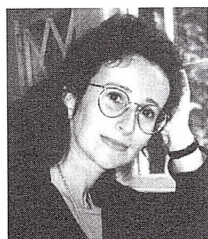
Greater Buffalo International Airport, Buffalo, New York, Kohn Pedersen Fox

Bloomingdale's in Beverly Hills (with 100 percent valet parking, of course), and an **IRS Building** in New Carrollton, Maryland....**Davis, Brody & Associates** has three new commissions for the Paris-based automotive components and systems manufacturer **Valeo**. And why is a car-parts maker paying for Architecture? It seems that Valeo, a pragmatic international company that likes its pragmatism writ large and clear, understands the power of the architectural message as well as the effectiveness of enlightened planning. Valeo has hired DBA for projects in Detroit, Birmingham (UK), and Mexico because of the firm's convincing work for corporations like Corning Glass and Hallmark Cards. The car-parts manufacturer wants its technical resources to be showcased and its administrative activities downplayed, so the architects are locating the research and engineering areas at the front of the buildings and the sales and marketing areas behind. The manufacturer also insists on open, flexible, nonhierarchical spaces for labs, engineering areas, and even offices, to "promote productive project team efforts," according to senior associate Carl Krebs. The buildings are all in preliminary design....**The Center for Public Architecture** is holding a five-week workshop, ending November 30, to explore the redevelopment of a 406-acre site on **Randall's and Ward's Island**. CPA, the research and design center founded in February by the 100-year-old **National Institute for Architectural Education**, is conducting the workshop as part of its mission to improve "the planning and design of cities, using the New York metropolitan area as its laboratory." The island (two islands joined by landfill) is probably best known as the location of the Triborough Bridge interchange. Also prominent are the Manhattan State Hospital, a Department of Sanitation facility, and Downing Stadium. Despite its hodgepodge development up to this time, the island's underused acreage and proximity to three boroughs point to its potential as an outdoor recreation and sports center (notably to serve Bronx and Harlem youths). A partnership of the Randall's Island Sports Foundation and the New York City Parks and Recreation Department has chosen a professional team (not

announced as *Oculus* goes to press) to prepare a preliminary master plan and feasibility study for the redevelopment. CPA hopes to provide relevant and useful research and analysis for these professionals, the public agency, and the public, a contribution endorsed and assisted by the Sports Foundation and the Parks Department.

Since CPA's mandate stresses an educational component, architecture students and recent graduates are taking part in the endeavor. Tutorial students from the **New York Institute of Technology** are participating in the workshop, and design studios at **Columbia University** and the **University of Pennsylvania** are being held with the island redevelopment as the focus. Recent graduates have been chosen to act as interns for the workshop in conjunction with a professional senior fellow (**Deborah Berke**) and advisors (**Lee Weintraub**, **Marion Weiss**, and **Michael Manfredi**). CPA will present an exhibition and symposium next spring or summer to display and critique the issues and solutions uncovered by the professional team and the students, and the material will be published in a brochure.

Obituary



Deborah Norden

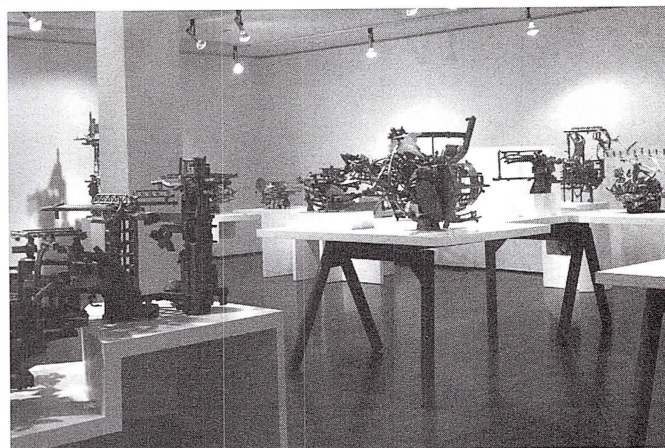
Deborah Norden, an architect and a program administrator for the New York State Council on

the Arts, died in the USAir plane crash in September. Norden, who was 40 and a resident of Manhattan, had received her masters of architecture degree from Princeton University and her bachelors degree in architectural history from Brown University. Between 1980 and 1984, she worked in the New York architecture offices of Paul Segal Associates, Charles Boxenbaum, and Richard Dattner and Associates. She joined the architecture, planning, and design department of NYSCA in 1985,

where her mandate was to find and fund strong and useful architecture and preservation projects throughout the state. While at NYSCA, she spent a year at Harvard as a Loeb Fellow.

A description of Norden's accomplishments, however, only suggests the full range of her professional and personal impact, according to those who knew her. Unassuming, but with a lively, inquiring mind, she was "quietly dazzling," according to Anne Van Ingen, her friend and the director of Norden's department at NYSCA. "She had an amazing ability for spotting and nurturing talent, a huge depth of knowledge about the field, and hundreds of warm professional contacts around the world. She was a thoroughly committed professional." Many other former professional colleagues remained friendly with her, including Paul Segal, who calls her "a person who was really excited by ideas in a wonderful way. She was smart and so tuned-in, with a sharp sense of humor. She was a loyal, caring friend who received back the loyalty she gave." Among the NYSCA projects in which Norden played a key role were an AIDS hospice recently built in Buffalo and a design competition held in 1985 for a large inner-city infill project (unbuilt) in Harlem. Norden also illustrated children's books, which were published by a private press she and her husband ran. She edited the book *Reweaving the Urban Fabric* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1988) and was preparing, with the help of a McDowell Fellowship, a book on Fay Jones, left unfinished.

Norden is survived by her husband, psychiatrist Dr. Barry Magid, her parents, Peter and Ruth Norden, of Westchester, her sister, Linda Norden, of Manhattan, and her grandmother, Margaret Norden, of Forest Hills, Queens. Dr. Magid has set up a fund in Norden's name, to be administered by the Architectural League of New York. The Deborah J. Norden Fund will award grants to support research and writing on design issues. Contributions are welcome.



Richard Meier sculpture exhibition, Leo Castelli Gallery

Richard Meier at Castelli Gallery

by Barbara MacAdam

This show looks at first as though it might be every architect's nightmare or, better, many architects' dream. In this carefully installed — that is, packed together in seemingly random, warehouse fashion — show, form and content speak with one voice. Richard Meier's 40 metal sculptures are the ultimate deconstructions, which look as the world might immediately post-Apocalypse.

Though not a deconstructor in his principal occupation, Meier pulls out all stops as a sculptor. These pieces are, no doubt, cathartic expressions — the things an architect can't normally do or say. Forms are torn apart (à la *Star Wars*' R2D2 after a grueling accident), with sinews or wires severed and left dangerously exposed. Many of the sculptures are rusted, as though abandoned. Most have an architectonic structure, but one that is intended as anti-structure.

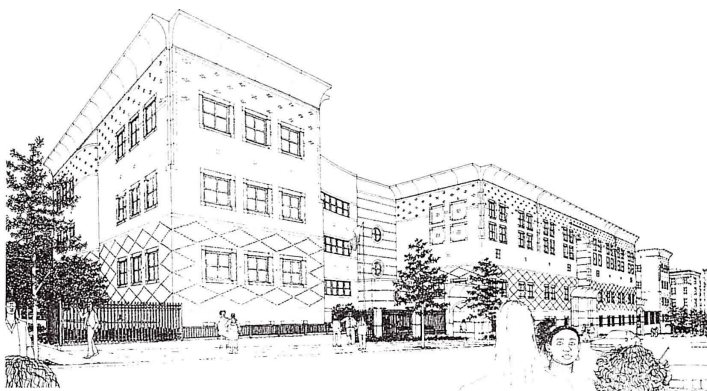
As strange and otherworldly as these forceful, if not wholly resolved, works seem, they have a familiarity — in their affinity not only with the accoutrements of science fiction, but also with the works of such quirky artists as Yves Tinguely (we expect them to jostle and clang, but they don't). *Birnaui*, for example, a 1993 work, presents a microcosm of the city in decay: On a piece of rock supported by a vertical girder fragment, a pile of junk mounts up in an artful yet seemingly precarious balance. The problem, however, is that it is not precarious enough. Working with scraps of his own architectural models, Meier ties his elements together with string, dips them in wax, makes a ceramic mold, and casts them in stainless steel. The resulting monochrome assemblages suffer from Meier's effort to make them appear spontaneously disrupted.

We would sooner expect Frank Gehry, as architects go, to be turning these tricks, but then he doesn't have to; his building style allows for this kind of expressive intellectualism. Ultimately, Meier's art is offensive and disconcerting, revealing the breadth of an architect's desire to control his audiences.

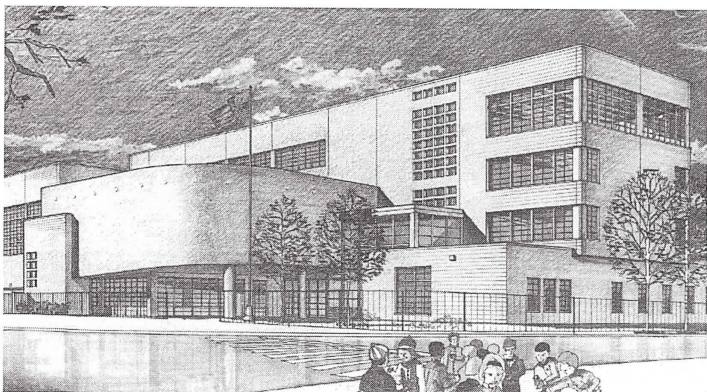
Barbara MacAdam is an editor at ARTnews

LEAN AND LEANER:

by Peter Slatin



I.S. 90, Richard Dattner, Architect



P.S. 37, elevation, Liebman Melting Partnership



P.S. 51, Guzen Samton

As spanning new schools — the late harvest of the New York City School Construction Authority's initial \$4.3 billion, five-year plan — began opening throughout the city with the new school year this September, the Board of Education was scrutinizing the second proposed five-year plan for the SCA. There wasn't much to examine,

however, since the Board of Ed's request for \$7.5 billion had been neatly bisected during budget hearings and stood at just \$3.4 billion, 20 percent less than the first allotment.

The news for New York City's children — and for its architects — could not be much bleaker. Three-quarters of the money in the first plan was

poured into major construction, or "line" projects, while the remainder was preserved for capital improvement projects (CIPs). The new proposal reverses those proportions almost exactly, and also shifts most spending to the later years of the plan.

Even though some funding already in the pipeline from the Authority's first five years will continue to flow toward the completion of new schools and major modernizations, the eventual shutoff of that pipeline will create some serious difficulties for the building community. The sharp decrease in large-scale work will not be a positive force in the region's slowly escalating recovery, and could prove to be a strong threat to continued growth. In preparation for its shifting priorities, the SCA has worked hard to reorganize its design and engineering division, not only to provide better oversight of work handed to outside consultants, but also to create a stronger base from which to run more projects in-house.

"In the past," says Ralph Steinglass, who joined the SCA as vice president of architecture and engineering this summer, "repair work was scheduled on a program basis. The Board looked at various components — windows, roofs, etc. — that bundled together would end up with multiple contractors under separate supervision." Under these procedures, work would often get done piecemeal on a single school, causing long-term interruptions that exacerbated management burdens. "Now," says Steinglass, "the plan combines all the work that needs to be done on each school, and puts priorities on that work."

Officials at the SCA and the Board of Education, as well as architects who have worked on schools under the first plan, all expressed dismay and even outrage at the constraints the new plan places on the Authority. Only eight new schools and four additions will be built by the time the plan ends in 2000, rather than the 33 new buildings requested under the original proposal. No new schools will be begun

next year, and the bulk of funds will be spent to seal up the most seriously damaged structures in the city's battered 1,000-building system.

As *Oculus* goes to press, some architects and even some SCA staffers were hoping that the Board would somehow add funds to the Authority's budget. That seemed extremely unlikely, however. "It's a done deal," one official says simply. Barry E. Light, president and chief executive officer of the SCA, says, "I can't turn around to a city budget that's strapped to the limits, and say, 'give me more.' There's no flexibility." Indeed, any flexibility that might be found in the plan could bend it in the wrong direction. "The city could start taking money out of the capital budget, too," notes Robert Buxbaum, the Board of Ed's new executive director for facilities, who recently replaced Amy Linden. "The Mayor can't print money."

Still, \$3.4 billion seems like a reasonable amount of cash, even when spread over five years. But according to the Board of Education's own figures, the school system requires about \$25 billion in total capital spending just to be brought up to contemporary school building standards. The plan, said one official, just isn't based on needs. And then there is the capacity question: The student population is booming, growing at a rate of 20,000 students — or 20 new 1,000-seat schools — per year. Some of the state-of-the-art schools built under the last plan are already oversubscribed. Meanwhile, notes an architect who has designed schools for both the Board of Ed and the SCA, this growth comes at a time when the Board of Ed is trying to reengineer schools to a smaller, more manageable format, and some of the older, most pathetic school buildings need to be removed from circulation.

The confluence of severely restricted construction money, a rapidly deteriorating building stock, and a looming seating crunch that has already made itself felt is a less than happy one for the city. The Board of Education's bureaucracy has taken its share of the

HOLDING ON AT SCA

blame for creating current conditions, through deferred maintenance and poor building and construction management. The Board's failure to keep its facilities at par with those of other systems around the country placed it in the catch-up posture that the SCA was created to redress.

The new plan, which effectively represents the SCA's transition from a building engine to a maintenance organization, "implies a major shift in thinking, and we support that," says Barry Light. During the asbestos crisis in the summer of 1993, he notes, "we got to see the entire system, and it was pretty damned appalling. We found roofs leaking, windows broken, steel beams rotted out, electrical systems from the dark ages, facades crumbling" — not to mention 353 coal-fired boilers. Now, says Light, the mandate is to "seal up the buildings: replace the roofs and windows and do repointing where it's called for."

The reorganization of the SCA's design and engineering division attacked a fragmented process both physically and conceptually, says Ralph Steinglass. The architecture and engineering groups were separated on either side of the huge central atrium at the SCA's Long Island City headquarters; that separation was carried through within each grouping as well. "It was hierarchical and discipline-driven," says Steinglass. "In engineering, there were divisions for structural, HVAC, plumbing, drainage, and electrical that make a lot of sense in most consulting firms, but took on more importance here. It became very unwieldy to try to track smaller projects, like those we're going to be doing."

The new arrangement consists of three fully integrated design studios, which include architecture and engineering functions; the studios also perform design review for one another. Each team has about 55 people, and "has enough of the basic a/e skills to handle any of the types of jobs we have slated, including line projects if those should emerge in later years," says Steinglass.

Timing Is Everything

The reorganization, the one bright spot in an otherwise grim scenario, spins out its own dark halos. This careful blending of studio management techniques with program requirements and client needs (i.e., Board of Ed, the SCA's sole client) positions the revamped studios of the SCA to carry out their mandate. Desperately needed as they were, however, the changes would have been even more appropriate at the outset of the SCA's first plan. More to the point, the second plan itself, geared as it is toward preserving the existing, badly troubled building stock, would have been more appropriate had it been ordered when the Authority was born, because greater amounts of money would have been able to accomplish more after five fewer years of wear-and-tear than is now possible. "With 20/20 hindsight," says Robert Buxbaum, who helped shepherd construction projects through the dual bureaucracies of the City University of New York and the state's Dormitory Authority, "the Board should have done a lot more exterior modernization in the first five-year plan. They did a bunch of gut renovations and built some very nice buildings, but the cost was enormous."

So much for looking backward. The harder truth is that the conditions under which the SCA was created virtually precluded an early building-preservation program over the all-out building program that was put in place. The appointment of Buxbaum is emblematic of the Board's maturity in facing up to its problems as a construction agency, but it comes somewhat late in the game. Yet officials at both agencies are relieved at the thaw in a previously frosty coupling. "There are much better relations between the Board and the SCA now," says Barry Light. Both Board and SCA staffers agree that their agencies viewed one another with mutual hostility stemming from the fact that the SCA "was created to walk away from the Board," Light says. "It took a very long time for the relationship to settle."

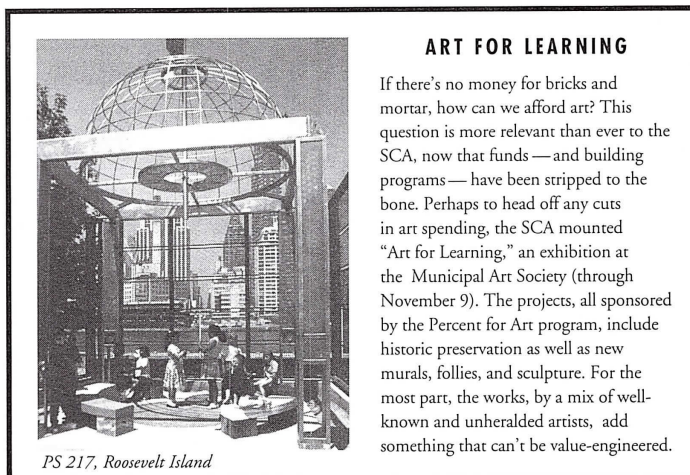
Still, Buxbaum is wary about the ability of the reorganized SCA to deal with its reorganized priorities. "They don't have the mindset of doing small projects," he notes. "These are not whole buildings from A to Z. There's a lot of adjusting to do." As to how the Board will face up to the realities of the crumbling system, he says, "You try to build what you have money to build. You have to improve use, find ways around the margins — year-round education, night high school, portable classrooms [trailers that the SCA is modifying for classroom use]. But even if you fill vacant seats everywhere you can find them, even if you violate district lines, you're still left with hundreds of thousands of seats to build."

Finally, there is the cheapness factor: "Modify the standards and the target you're trying to create," says Buxbaum. "We have to recognize in programming that we must not create two classes of schools, one with modern technologies — TVs and computers in every classroom — and one with 60-year-old desks and peeling paint. You've got to scale back your idea of what it is to build a school." That means, he explains, setting up the infrastructure but holding back on the equipment: "Build buildings with conduit, but not with cable and equipment." Even that is wishful thinking, given the meagerness of the new plan, under which, Buxbaum says with exasperation, "the interiors are barely going to get touched."

Despite Buxbaum's concerns over the Authority's readiness to take on the plethora of mundane yet crucial projects in the new plan, the SCA's architects and engineers — there are some 170 staffers in the division — will be busy. However, many firms that were sustained by SCA work in the past, including maintenance and minor construction work, will not be so fortunate. Officials acknowledge that the proportion of work done in-house by the Authority will increase and that the number of outside firms used will shrink. "It's going to be a severe blow to the private sector," says one architect who has worked with the Authority.

That prediction doesn't appear to faze Barry Light. "Everybody wants to be a designer of a nice new school," he says. "But when I went privately to the architectural community and asked, 'What can you do for us on a multiple roof repair?', I didn't get a reasonable response. Naturally, I would love to not have all this design work go away. Not all of this new work — but a lot of it — is more efficient to do in-house. Still, I'd be happy to discuss how people can get involved."

"It's really a bind," says Steinglass. "There's no question that the Board is on the right track in this plan just to stay even. But it is not going to do anything to improve the quality of education here."



PS 217, Roosevelt Island

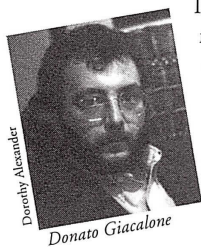
ART FOR LEARNING

If there's no money for bricks and mortar, how can we afford art? This question is more relevant than ever to the SCA, now that funds — and building programs — have been stripped to the bone. Perhaps to head off any cuts in art spending, the SCA mounted "Art for Learning," an exhibition at the Municipal Art Society (through November 9). The projects, all sponsored by the Percent for Art program, include historic preservation as well as new murals, follies, and sculpture. For the most part, the works, by a mix of well-known and unheralded artists, add something that can't be value-engineered.

PULSE

by Katherine K. Chia

Donato Giacalone

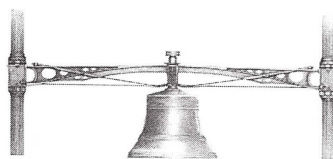


Dorothy Alexander

Donato Giacalone

In contrast to his responsibilities as an associate architect with Medhat Salam Associates, where he is in charge of large federal

and local government renovation and adaptive reuse projects, Donato Giacalone's personal design agenda is that "buildings on paper don't have to be built [in order to merit attention],...they can be the finished product." John Hejduk's influence on Giacalone's unbuilt projects is apparent in works done during his years at Cooper Union. In his conceptual design for a temple for Dante, the composition of vibrant, overlapping Prismacolor geometries could be mistaken for a cubist portrait of Medusa's head. Three entry tubes, symbolic of the Holy Trinity, snake their way toward the temple's rectangular concrete shell. Entering the ominous tower core, the visitor is con-



Bell rendering, Marcus Garvey Park Watch Tower, Donato Giacalone

founded by a maze of three timber stairs that ricochet up through the sanctuary, randomly bouncing off the walls and allowing in light. Only one stair leads to the skylight at the top, symbolizing the path to heaven in Dante's *Paradise*.

Giacalone's phantasmagoric paper projects help to balance out the daily grind of more terrestrial office assignments. One of his pet projects at Medhat Salam's office, the restoration of the landmarked 1845 fire tower at Marcus Garvey Park and 122nd Street, allowed him the luxury of hand-drafting all the construction drawings. (Friends of the Marcus Garvey Park are currently raising funds to pay for the construction costs.)

Jane Sachs, Scott DeVere— Together Separately

Jane Sachs's agility in working with inexpensive materials and unusual finishes comes in part from her ten-year career as a potter. Scott DeVere moves between the ephemeral world of dance and performance design and the more stolid realm of office experience, where he has worked with Ronnette Riley, Studio Asymptote, and James Stewart Polshek. Husband-and-wife architects, they keep their practices separate, but act as in-house critics for each other.

Interested in "trying to reinvent the pragmatic," Jane Sachs approaches each architectural project as she would a ceramics piece: Form, colors, and textures are a blending of concept and craft with influences from contemporary art. Upon graduation from

Columbia's GSAPP in 1991, her first commission was an \$80,000 renovation and conversion of an old post office in Laguna Beach, California, into an office for B. B. Dakota, a retail clothing import company. Maintaining an open floor plan, she filled the space with randomly splayed fluorescent light bars suspended from existing wood trusses. Translucent sky-

light boxes (designed with her Columbia classmate, architect Belen Moneo) bring day-



Jane Sachs

light into the room like glowing stalactites. An extra bow truss laid on its side forms the curve for a free-standing, buffed green Plexiglas wall that screens the conference area. Sachs says, "I was creating a small landscape in the interior, stitching and weaving elements in a way that is similar to the client's process of making a piece of clothing."

Her experience with Walter Chatham Architects gave Sachs the opportunity to work on several small loft renovations. For a 2,000-square-foot, \$28,000 loft renovation, she relied on glow-in-the-dark Formica to enliven the counters and sliding doors of the kitchen. Buffed Plexiglas wall panels were clipped into fittings and suspended from cables secured to floor and ceiling. As the focus of the main room,



Lispard Street loft renovation, Jane Sachs

Sachs designed a wood conference table, with metal vases nestled into a slot in the center.

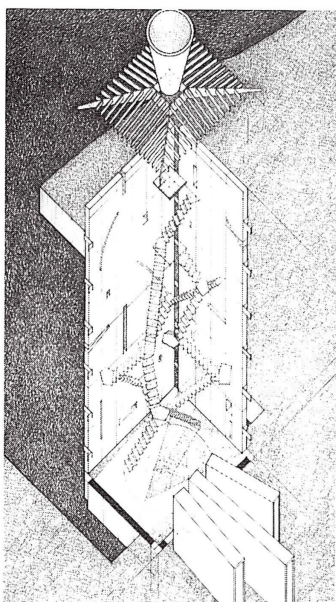
Sachs is currently taking a break from her full-time job with Perkins & Eastman to renovate two New York lofts. In one, she will use rice paper sandwiched between floor-to-ceiling glass panels to divide the bedroom, hallway, and bathroom areas. The other design involves "feng shui," an ancient Chinese design methodology requested by the client to bring him good luck with his Pacific Rim clients. Although she was conscious of maintaining balanced yin-yang relationships between the various living areas, Sachs avoided specific decorations used to channel positive "qi" energy. "I didn't want to end up with mirrors all over the place," she says.

While DeVere critiqued Sachs on the B. B. Dakota project, Sachs was simultaneously critiquing DeVere's renovation of their 2,500-square-foot Soho residential and work loft. The space is divided by floor-to-ceiling Plexiglas sliding panels, some etched with architectural drawings of the B. B. Dakota space.



B. B. Dakota, Laguna Beach, California, Jane Sachs

Dorothy Alexander



Temple for Dante, Donato Giacalone

URBAN CENTER BOOKS' TOP 10

As of September 29, 1994

1. **Peter Rice: An Engineer Imagines**, Peter Rice (Artemis, cloth, \$49.95).
2. **A Sense of Time, A Sense of Place**, J. B. Jackson (Yale, cloth, \$22.50).
3. **Event Cities**, Bernard Tschumi (MIT Press, paper, \$29.95).
4. **A History of Architectural Theory**, Hanno-Walter Kruft (Princeton Architectural Press, cloth, \$65.00).
5. **Architecture and Disjunction**, Bernard Tschumi (MIT Press, cloth, \$27.50).
6. **Back to the Front**, Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio (Princeton Architectural Press, paper, \$29.95).
7. **Cities in a World Economy**, Saskia Sassen (Pine Forge, paper, \$21.95).
8. **Calvert Vaux: Architect and Planner**, William Alex (Ink, Inc., cloth, \$100.00).
9. **Jean Nouvel, 1987-1994**, El Croquis No. 65/66 (El Croquis, paper, \$67.00).
10. **Architecture of Transportation**, Profile No. 109 (Academy Editions, paper, \$26.95).

RIZZOLI BOOKSTORES' TOP 10

As of September 29, 1994

1. **Event Cities**, Bernard Tschumi (MIT Press, paper, \$29.95).
2. **Architecture from Without**, Diana Agrest (MIT Press, paper, \$14.95).
3. **Gwathmey Siegel, Buildings and Projects 1982-1992**, introduction by Peter Eisenman; eds. Brad Collins and Dian Kasprovicz (Rizzoli, paper, \$35.00).
4. **Karl Friedrich Schinkel**, Barry Bergdoll (Rizzoli, cloth, \$55.00).
5. **Making the Most of Small Spaces**, Anoop Parikh (Rizzoli, cloth, \$18.95).
6. **Contemporary Details**, Nonie Niesewand (Simon & Schuster, cloth, \$35.00).
7. **GA Houses 40** (A.D.A. Edità, paper, \$29.95).
8. **Villas of Tuscany**, Carlo Cresti (Vendome, cloth, \$85.00).
9. **International Book of Lofts**, Suzanne Slesin (Crown, cloth, \$35.00).
10. **Richard Meier, Architect, Volume 2**, Kenneth Frampton and Peter Rykwert (Rizzoli, paper, \$40.00).

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AIA New York Chapter Committee Meetings

NOVEMBER

2

6:00 PM

Public Architects

7

6:00 PM

Interiors

8

6:00 PM

Computer Applications
at Hellmuth Obata &
Kassabaum

10

6:00 PM

Minority Resource

14

6:00 PM

Minority Housing

6:30 PM

Learning By Design

16

12:30 PM

Architecture For Education

6:00 PM

Corporate Architects
at Zintzmeyer Lux

17

8:30 AM

Public Sector Contracts

Please confirm meeting
times and locations by calling

AIA New York Chapter
headquarters at 683-0023.

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**Private Homes
and Art
Collections**

November/December 1994

November

1

Tuesday LECTURE

ABC: International Constructivist Architecture. Given by Sina Ingberman. Sponsored by the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. 6:30 pm. 2 E. 91st St. 860-6868. \$15.

2

Wednesday LECTURES

Architectures in Love. Given by John Hejduk. Sponsored by Columbia University GSAPP. 6:30 pm. Wood Auditorium, Avery Hall, Columbia University. 854-3414.

Philip Johnson, A Biography. Given by Franz Schulz. Sponsored by Urban Center Books and the Municipal Art Society. 6:00 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. Reservations required, 935-3595. \$5.

Seymour Chwast. Sponsored by Cooper Union. 6:30 pm. Wollman Auditorium, 51 Astor Pl. 353-4195. \$20.

3

Thursday EXHIBIT

5

Saturday FORUM

Getting an Edge: Architects, Artists, Designers, and the Competitive Process. Sponsored by the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. 9:30 am. 2 E. 91st St. Reservations, 860-6321.

AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT

Planning Day for New York Chapter Board of Directors (1994-1995) and Committee Chairs. 10:00 am. Please call 683-0023 for information about location.

8

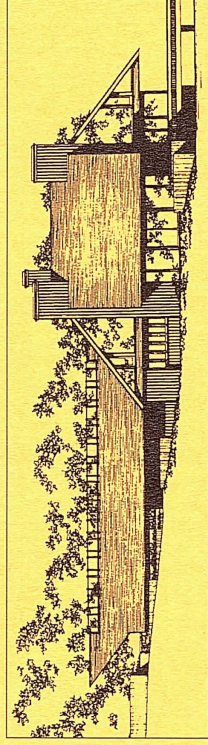
Tuesday AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT

Diverse Perspectives. Given by Toshiko Mori, AIA, and Diane Lewis. Sponsored by the AIA New York Chapter Minority Resources Committee. 6:00 pm. Fashion Institute of Technology, Seventh Ave. at 27th St. Reservations, 683-0023, ext. 16.

LECTURE

Rem Koolhaas. Sponsored by Urban Center Books. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. Reservations required, 935-3595. \$5.

9



Pallone House East elevation, Pallone House, Fay Jones

14

Monday EXHIBIT

Construction Intention Detail. Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, Avery Hall, 100-level. 854-3414. Closes December 16.

15

Tuesday BENEFIT

Design and Ambiguity. A lecture by Milton Glaser to benefit the Cooper Union Great Hall. 6:00 pm. The Great Hall, 7 E. Seventh St. 353-4195. Lecture, \$25; with reception, \$225.

FORUM

The Politics of Design. Cosponsored by the Organization of Lesbian and Gay Architects and Designers and the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. 6:30 pm. 2 E. 91st St. 860-6321. \$15.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Community Action, Grassroots Preservation, and the Use of Landmarks and Historic Sites. Cosponsored by the Municipal Art Society, the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, and the Bronx Landmarks Task Force. 6:30 pm. 2 E. 91st St. Reservations, 860-6321.

21

Monday LECTURES

Electronic Communities. Given by Jeet Singh. Sponsored by the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. 6:30 pm. 2 E. 91st St. 860-6321. \$15.

22

Tuesday LECTURE

Peter Walker. Sponsored by Urban Center Books. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. Reservations required, 935-3595. \$5.

SEMINAR

Adding Vision to Universal Design. Sponsored by AIA New York State and the Lighthouse, Inc. 8:30 am. 111 E. 59th St. For more information, call 821-9470.

Deadlines

NOVEMBER 18

Submission deadline for the Arnold W. Brunner grant for advanced study in an area contributing to the knowledge, teaching, or practice of the art and science of architecture. Contact the AIA New York Chapter, 683-0023.

DECEMBER 31

Submission deadline for papers and projects to be published in the 1995-1996 issue of *The Classicist*. Contact the Institute for the Study of Classical Architecture, 111 Franklin St., New York, NY 10013, 570-7374.

JANUARY 17

Submission deadline for Envisioning East New York, a study to propose design strategies for four areas in eastern Brooklyn. Contact the Architectural League, 753-1722.

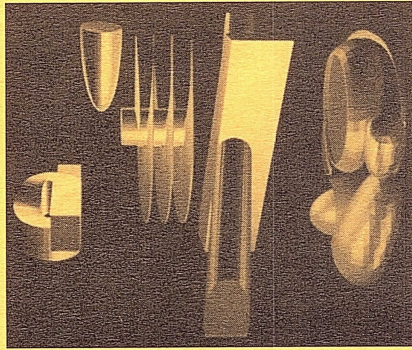
MARCH 1

Entry deadline for John Dinkeldoo Bequests/American Academy in Rome traveling fellowships in architectural design and technology. Contact the National Institute for Architectural Education, 30 W. 22nd Street, New York, NY 10010, 924-7000.

MAY 12

Entry deadline for Lloyd Warren

AIA NEW YORK



Roni Koolhaas exhibit, computer-generated rendering of public spaces

CHAPTER EVENT

Marketing All-Stars. Moderated by Joan Capelin, with panelists Philip Johnson, FAIA, and Eugene Kohn, FAIA. Sponsored by AIA New York Chapter Marketing and Public Relations Committee. 5:30 pm. Trishman Auditorium, 66 W. 12th St. Reservations, 683-0023, ext. 16.

4

Friday LECTURE

Current Work. Given by Martha Schwartz. Sponsored by the Architectural League. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 753-1722. \$7.

Massimo

Vignelli.

Sponsored by Cooper Union. 6:30 pm. Wollman Auditorium, 51 Astor Pl. 353-4195. \$20.



Massimo Vignelli

EXHIBIT

Karel Teige: 1900-1951. Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, Avery Hall, 400-level. 854-3414. Closes December 16.

10

Thursday

AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT

Tour of Eugene O'Neill Theater. Sponsored by AIA New York Chapter Art and Architecture Committee. 5:45 pm. Reservations, 683-0023, ext. 16.

LECTURES

A Workshop for Peace: Designing the United Nations Headquarters. Given by George Dudley. Sponsored by the Municipal Art Society. 12:00 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 935-3960.

Masters of Design: Fay Jones. Sponsored by the Architectural League. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 753-1722. \$7.

AIA NEW YORK

CHAPTER EVENT

Pilar Viladas speaks on Ada Louise Huxtable. Sponsored by AIA New York Chapter Women in Architecture Committee. 6:00 pm. 200 Lexington Ave. Reservations, 683-0023.

LECTURES



Recent Work. Given by Charles Gwathmey. Sponsored by Columbia University GSAPP. 6:30 pm. Wood Auditorium, Avery Hall, Columbia University. 854-3414.

Charles Gwathmey

Avery Hall, Columbia University.

Paul Davis. Sponsored by Cooper Union. 6:30 pm. Wollman Auditorium, 51 Astor Pl. 353-4195. \$20.

17

Thursday

AIA NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENT

1994 Architectural Heritage Ball. Presentation of the President's Award to Edward Larrabee Barnes, FAIA. Black-tie. For more information, contact Marcy Stanley at 683-0023, ext. 15.

Tuesday

LECTURE

Thom Mayne: Morphosis. Sponsored by Urban Center Books. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. Reservations required, 935-3595. \$5.

30

Wednesday

LECTURE

From Program to Detail: A Practical Theory. Given by George Ranalli. Sponsored by Columbia University GSAPP. 6:30 pm. Wood Auditorium, Avery Hall, Columbia University. 854-3414.

December

1

Thursday

LECTURES

Pump and Circumstance: Glory Days of the Gas Station. Given by John Margolies. Sponsored by the Municipal Art Society. 12:00 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 935-3960.

Architecture in the Age of AIDS. Given by Alan Wanzenberg, Gerald Olanoff, and Terence Brennan. Sponsored by the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. 6:30 pm. 2 E. 91st St. Reservations, 860-6321.

Current Work. Given by Stanley Saitowitz. Sponsored by the Architectural League. 6:30 pm. The Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 753-1722. \$7.

Education, 30 W. 22nd St., New York, NY 10010, 924-7000.

Continuing Exhibitions

Art for Learning. The Municipal Art Society, Urban Center Galleries, 457 Madison Ave. 935-3960. Closes November 10.

Suburbs of Utopia: Michael Sorkin Studio. Storefront for Art and Architecture, 97 Kenmare St. 431-5795. Closes November 12.

Morris Lapidus: Mid-Century Modernist. Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, Arthur Ross Architecture Gallery. 854-3414. Closes November 12.

The Machine Next Door. The Municipal Art Society, Urban Center Galleries, 457 Madison Ave. 935-3960. Closes December 9.

The Italian Metamorphosis, 1943-1968. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave. Closes January 29.

Good Offices and Beyond: The Evolution of the Workplace. The Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 E. 91st St. 860-6868. Closes February 26.

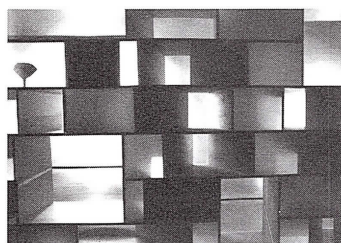
The National Design Museum: A New Identity for the Cooper-Hewitt. The Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 2 E. 91st St. 860-6868. Closes March 7.

PULL OUT
&
PIN UP

Send *Oculus* calendar information to AIA New York Chapter, 200 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

Oculus welcomes information for the calendar pertaining to public events about architecture and the other design professions. Information is due in writing six weeks before the month of the issue in which it will appear.

Because of the time lag between when information is received and when it is printed, final details of events are likely to change. We recommend that you check with sponsoring institutions before attending.



Wall detail, loft, NYC, Scott DeVere

In addition, last year, for the highly acclaimed performance *Red Squalls*, De Vere transformed the plaza of Lincoln Center with a 200-foot-long, polyester-mesh, pink-and-peach-colored partition that was carried around the Henry Moore reflecting pool by junior performers from the Solomons Company/Dance group. The Christoesque "running fence" defined the parameters of the performance area, wrapped the principal dancers, and linked them to the surrounding area.



"Red Squalls" dance performance, Lincoln Center, 1993, Scott DeVere with Solomons Company/Dance Group

Earlier this year, DeVere was hired by Butler Rogers Baskett to design the lobbies for the new 50,000-square-foot MTV offices at Times Square. He had intended the main lobby to be visually chaotic, with suspended MTV monitors in glass cages and a field of lights casting a morass of shadow lines on the floor from behind hundreds of colored wires. The design was driven by the client's desire to be noncorporate, says DeVere. Surprisingly, MTV, home to "Beavis and Butthead" and a deluge of visually schizophrenic music videos, felt DeVere's design was too radical for its image.

DeVere, who devotes much of his spare time to competitions (at least two a year), received an honorable mention last spring for his submission in the Urban House low-income design competition for Columbus, Ohio, currently on exhibit in

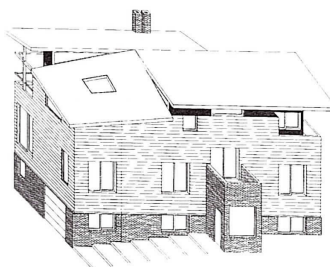
Columbus. Although his wood-siding entry is under 1,250 square feet, the stuccoed second floor bellows out from the footprint below and "expands the perception of size," says DeVere, and the roof lines maximize solar gain in the winter. The main stair is isolated in the enclosed entry foyer so the house can be transformed from a two- to three-bedroom single-family home into two separate units occupied by single individuals.

Donna Seftel

Apart from her undergraduate years at Cornell School of Architecture, Donna Selene Seftel credits her employment with Steven Holl as the most important educational experience to influence her design sensibilities. Seftel recently left a studio space and set up a three-person office in her apartment. Still, she prefers collaborations and is interested in forming a "big co-op of 10 to 20 architects and artists" who could mix and match their skills for a variety of projects.

Seftel tries to make the most of working with small budgets. "Usually it gives rise to the use of innovative materials and a simplified construction method," she says. Her 100-square-foot interactive playhouse featured in the Katonah Museum of Art exhibit "Shelter and Dreams: Playhouses by Architects and Artists" (on display until November 13, when it goes to the Fort Wayne Museum in Indiana) was built for \$5,500. Four walls of pivoting-shutter Dutch doors allow the playhouse to breathe in numerous configurations, controlling ventilation, shade, and privacy. Made of standard metal shelving, polyurethane medium-density fiberboard, and polystyrene quilting batting, the doors were designed to endure the seven-month outdoor exposure. One panel acts as a door for a child, while two panels provide a space tall enough for an adult to pass through. Inside, a ceiling of Thermoclear from Lexan allows light to filter down to the interactive furniture unit, two stacked pivoting storage boxes that can be configured into a bed, desk, or chair.

The original shuttered house was designed for a client who wanted a



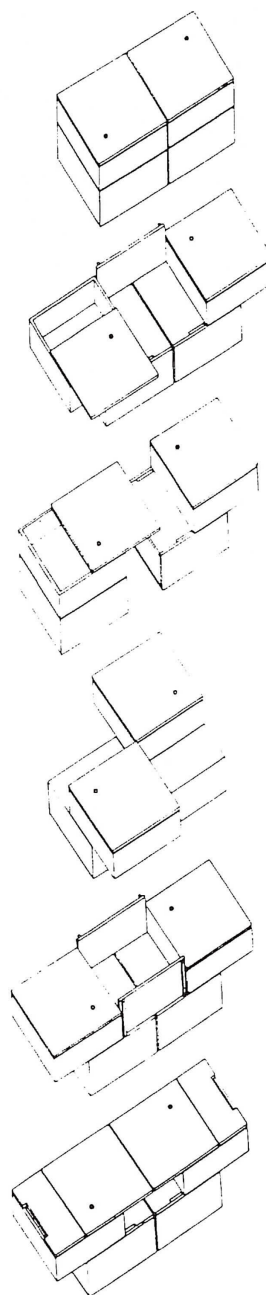
Residential addition, Huntington, New York, Donna Seftel

three-bedroom, 3,200-square-foot hurricane-proof vacation house on the Caribbean island of Culebra, made of nontoxic materials and built for \$50,000 to \$70,000. Seftel, working with assistant William Wilson, was inspired by the Japanese teahouse and Franco Albini's Palace of Water and Light project (1939), a simple "box with an atrium and poles." In order to erect the house on the island and keep costs down, the kit of prefabricated parts — 30 four-by-eight-foot Dutch doors — had to be constructed on the mainland at a Mennonite factory in Pennsylvania. The doors, made out of Heraklith, a magnesium fiberboard from Austria, pivot to three positions to allow eight-foot-square views and control cross ventilation. "The client was concerned about the view of a neighbor's ugly house, but with the shutters he can close off that view completely," Seftel noted.

Seftel is currently preparing for the \$90,000 construction of a 3,000-square-foot residential addition in Huntington, New York. The suburban box proportions of the existing house "were all wrong," according to Seftel; instead of attaching an appendage to the unit, she recommended building a third floor and redefining the roof lines. "It's a cheap way of doing an addition, and you get great views of the water," she said. Four roof plates tip down at different angles and heights to remind one of "attic spaces from childhood," and "new windows were installed in old places" along the existing facade to repropportion the massing. A new brick entry acts like a chimney against the eight-inch wood siding.

Upon the recommendation of MoMA's Terence Riley, Seftel was one of the 25 young architects from 22 countries invited to design installations built out of Legos for the "Gate of the Present" traveling exhibit, spon-

sored by Lego, Inc., and the Stichting kunstprojecten of Rotterdam. Her *Gate of Gates* entry has been on exhibit in Europe since the winter of 1992, having traveled from the Deutsches Arkitektur Museum in Frankfurt through the Netherlands, Belgium, Scandinavia, Scotland, and Portugal. Next year it will travel to the Museo de Arte Contemporanea in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The show will begin its United States tour in March at the Norton Art Gallery in Palm Beach, Florida.



Interactive playhouse, Donna Seftel

Interview

Deborah C. Wright Commissioner, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development



L. Racioppo/NYC-HPD

HPD Commissioner, Deborah C. Wright

Education: Radcliffe College, B.A., 1979; Harvard Law School, J.D., 1984; Harvard Business School, M.B.A., 1984.

Experience: Associate, First Boston Corp., 1984–87; director of marketing, New York City Partnership, Inc., 1987–88; executive director, Community Partnership Development Corp., 1988–90; adjunct professor, Columbia University GSAPP, 1990–92; commissioner, New York City Planning Commission, 1990–92; board member, New York City Housing Authority, 1992–94.

In mid-September, Housing Commissioner Wright unveiled "Building Blocks," HPD's latest attempt to deal with the huge inventory (50,000 units) of city-owned tenement buildings often or fewer units. Using not-for-profit community development agencies as intermediaries, HPD hopes to turn over the buildings to local entrepreneurs to rehabilitate, rent out, and manage, using neighborhood contractors to do the necessary building work. A pilot program of 2,500 units is expected to take three years to complete. Peter Slatin conducted the interview.

OCULUS: You have made city-owned brownstones and small apartments a priority with the release of your Building Blocks program. What kind of impact do you hope to have?

DEBORAH WRIGHT: The city owns 5,000 buildings, with an average of ten units apiece, or 50,000 units. We take over property after a private landlord has walked away from it, so it is already dilapidated. Even though it's a very positive and aggressive stance to rehabilitate and recycle a piece of property, we don't have enough money to do a good job. Our control over what happens to the buildings is minimal, so many of our buildings are being used as drug centers. Kids are growing up around lead paint.

The core objective of saving the buildings from being demolished has been achieved, and the second objective of providing affordable housing has been achieved, but despite very good intentions and spending quite a bit of money — around \$300 million a year — the effect on the quality of life in the communities and the displacement of private sector investment has had a ripple effect.

Our agency's relationship with these communities has been quite contentious and difficult. Even with the best of intentions, we often are greeted with suspicion, and rightfully so, given some of our history. We need to create a dialogue between two equals and reorient our thinking to support plans a community may have.

OCULUS: The city's 1980s auction sales of brownstones and apartment buildings were a disaster.

DW: That's because it's a mistake to think you can auction something, get a check, and assume that all the logical steps will just happen. How do we design a rehab program for families who can actually afford a mortgage? Our sense is you don't do that through an auction — you have a marketing process where people pre-qualify. We can get the lenders and the contractors to the table, as well as a not-for-profit intermediary that can oversee both the marketing and the construction. The community gets new residents and a rehabilitated block, and if that means that the City of New York has to give the buildings

away for a dollar, it's a positive thing, because we're spending money trying to recreate value.

OCULUS: If you had an open checkbook, how many units would you need to create?

DW: It seems infinite. The Housing Authority list is roughly 250,000 (*Oculus*, October 1994, p. 9), and that's sort of what we use as a benchmark. There are all sorts of incalculable relationships. The people who apply for our units through disparate programs appear on the Housing Authority's waiting list, and they also end up in other pipelines. The families that go through the shelter system and end up in our apartments often go back to the shelter system later because they can't exist comfortably in our environment. It's hard to figure out how many families the numbers actually represent. We've also got a lot of vacant land.

OCULUS: Is there a budget for construction on that vacant land?

DW: There is, and we're struggling with that, quite frankly. In terms of my priorities on the development end, number one is the in rem stock, number two is the vacant brownstones, and number three is trying to kick-start new construction. And that is a difficult nut to crack, because mixed-income rental product is the most expensive type of construction to do in New York City. We have roughly \$50 million in the budget for that this year, which we decided to push into the 1996 budget, because it's my view that HPD can't afford to do that program alone. We've asked the Housing Authority to consider being partners with us in that endeavor.

OCULUS: Has that ever been done before?

DW: No. The reason is bureaucracy. Given the deep subsidies required to build high-rise or even medium-rise new construction, you're talking about federal dollars. The Housing Authority has not only development dollars, but permanent rental subsidies for the families in its buildings. So we're trying to work out a way to go in 50-50. The difficulty, as you well know, is that the bosses can agree conceptually, and then it goes into a black hole of rules, regulations, and bureau-

crats. I think if we go with a united front to HUD, we'll have an opportunity to break through this impasse.

OCULUS: How do you plan to reach out to the architectural private sector to develop this land?

DW: Once we figure out a financing mechanism, we could try to get a prototype for an efficient building that we could replicate across the city. We can predict that we have X number of entire city blocks that can be built through this program, which exist in central and east Harlem, the South Bronx — particularly in Melrose — and portions of Brooklyn. If we can get the architectural community and the construction industry to design a prototype, much like they did with the SCA and the shelters, that would help tremendously on cost. Provided we can figure out how to put our two financial resources together, the issue will be how we can build this stuff efficiently.

OCULUS: These are neighborhoods that need a massive amount of help. What is HPD's role in trying to stabilize neighborhoods and bring jobs to them?

DW: The first thing we can do is insist that the buildings are economically integrated. I want us to collaborate with the Housing Authority, because their charter requires them to address the lowest income categories, the formerly homeless, very minimum wage families. While we spend most of our dollars that way as well, we do have the option of subsidizing working families who rank in the 80 to 160



320-22 Pleasant Avenue, Brooklyn



Bradhurst phase one, Frederick Douglass Blvd. and West 145th Street

Photos: L. Racioppo/NYC-HPD



1883 Union Street, Brooklyn

Photos: L. Racine/HPD



percent of median income category, or have an income of between \$25,000 and \$53,000 a year. If we pay for that segment and they pay for the lowest-income segment, then we will have an economically integrated structure and living environment.

Second, you have to make sure that families in transition get the services they need. One way to do that is to provide low-income tax credits. The Housing Authority also has subsidy programs that provide support services for residents. And back to where we started, Building Blocks supports local entrepreneurs, because they hire local people.

OCULUS: At what stage is the Bradhurst Development Plan in central Harlem? It was funded under Mayor Dinkins and was very ambitious in its scope and outreach to minority contractors.

DW: It is in phase two. They took some budget hits, but the financing was not structured in a way that maximized the leverage of our dollars; there was not enough private participation. The budget was reduced for phase three, but there's still \$100 million left for the next three to four years. The challenge will be to restructure the financing for Bradhurst so that it mimics the rest of our programs. The City of New York doesn't want to be the only person in the deal. We're looking at every single part of our development business to make sure that we are partners with the private sector and not on the hook alone.

OCULUS: Do you feel confident that the areas of the private sector you will be dealing with are committed to long-term improvement of the city's housing stock?

DW: The private sector is focused on wealth creation and profit, and in and of itself that's not bad. Our role as government is to make sure that there is equity and fairness and that people are well housed and well treated. My own view is that the lack of a functioning private market in the communities where we own property is one of the reasons those communities have been unable to rebound from the recession. My hope is Building Blocks will focus on local participation.

OCULUS: Where will you find the design professionals and contractors to work on these ten-unit structures?

DW: The entrepreneur will find them. Obviously, we will have to sign off on contracts and make sure the price is right and the projects get monitored appropriately. Pushing the deci-

sions of who to hire out of government frees up a whole new marketplace.

OCULUS: How do you envision using the architecture department here at HPD?

DW: We have 160 people in the department, but our job is ultimately to put ourselves out of business. Given the cycles in real estate, we will always be here, but my hope is that it will be a minimal endeavor, not a 4,000-person organization.

OCULUS: What you are talking about is going to create an additional layer of red tape, because you're going to be monitoring the entrepreneurs who are monitoring the architects.

DW: I think it's the opposite, actually. We have so many layers of rules and sign-offs, but with normal property owners, when the doorknob falls off, they buy a new doorknob, and it's finished. We would have to do a public bidding process, then get the contract

registered with the comptroller's office after the Office of Management and Budget has signed off that we have the money, then put an ad in the paper. We're going to say to the entrepreneur, you put together a relationship with the tenants that we've neglected for 15 years, and we're going to have a not-for-profit work with you during that transition. You hire an architect and an engineer, you go to the Buildings Department. This is your baby.

OCULUS: Which onerous regulations would you like to see addressed?

DW: How many days do you have for this interview? From every standpoint, changes need to be made. Some of the changes, such as self-certification, that Department of Buildings Commissioner Joel Miele is enacting are absolutely revolutionary, and are going to make construction and development move much faster. ♦

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Primary-Care Health Facilities

by Barbara Nadel, AIA

Medical institutions and provider organizations in New York State are developing innovative programs designed to cut health-care costs and improve consumer services by concentrating on primary health-care delivery. This initiative was the focus of a discussion cosponsored by Steelcase Healthcare and the AIA New York Chapter Health Facilities Committee at the Parkas Auditorium of New York University Medical Center. Entitled "Primary-Care Health Facilities — Initiatives and Implications," the event featured presentations by four expert panelists, and was moderated by Martin S. Begun, associate dean of the New York University School of Medicine, and Barbara A. Nadel, AIA, chair of the AIA New York Chapter Health Facilities Committee. Panelists represented four health-care organizations, but did not include architects or physicians, so that the audience could hear from the people who develop policy and implement programs for primary care in New York City.

During the programs, Begun acknowledged this country's need to make significant changes in the delivery of medical care, but cautioned against "destroying what is good" about it. "No other country in the world," he said, "comes close to the quality, intensity, and availability of American medicine." He cited the approximately 130 academic medical centers in the country as the "gems" that keep this country on the cutting edge of clinical care and medical research, a significant number of which are located in New York State.

On the issue of facility design, panelist Jack Essex, director of the ambulatory care network at the Montefiore Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, noted a shift in approach from the 1960s, when hard plastic chairs, vinyl flooring, and glass-block windows were common. Today, he claimed, client services are emphasized, with the

use of upholstered seating, carpeting, and other aesthetic amenities in both the waiting and patient-care areas. While older, larger facilities often bring to mind impersonal and institutional environments, the Montefiore Medical Center uses 5,000-square-foot facilities in which seven to eight providers function as a group practice, serving 8,000 to 10,000 patients annually. "Patients treat each other — and the facility — better in this setting," said Essex. Very often, however, these facilities have inadequate storage areas and require flexibility in the design of their furnishings. "It's costly to store paper in the Bronx," noted Essex, which is one reason Montefiore has installed its first community-based computerized medical records system.

Panelist Ronda Kotelchuck, executive director of the Primary Care Development Corporation (PCDC), noted that the development of primary-care facilities in underserved areas has been slowed by the lack of capital financing, inadequate revenue, and a shortage of primary-care providers. Through a complex financing arrangement, PCDC is investing \$250 million in these areas in order to build facilities over a five-year period, and has appropriated \$17 million in a revolving-loan fund for site acquisition, design, and regulation compliance. Kotelchuck noted that sites of less than 5,000 square feet are the easiest to find.

The Health Facilities Committee thanks Jeannie Bochette and Steelcase Healthcare for their gener-

ous support of this symposium, which brought together some of the major players formulating New York's health policy.

Barbara Nadel is on the AIA New York State Board of Directors, is vice chair of the AIA Academy for Health Design Committee, and is principal of Barbara Nadel Architect, specializing in health-care, correctional, and institutional facilities.

Funding New Schools: A Better Attack on Crime?

by Peter Samton, FAIA, and Paul Byard, FAIA

After starting an ambitious and successful program of new school construction and renovation five years ago, the City of New York is about to lapse back into its old, failed strategy of neglect. Deciding that habitable schools are something that we can't afford, it would slash the budget of the School Construction Authority and leave New York's children once again to fight for their educations — and their lives — in the overcrowded inventory of dilapidated buildings better-hearted generations built for them.

At the same time, however, the city and the state are actively enlarging another capital program, this one an ambitious program for the construction of prisons. In the clamor of the moment about crime, cells, it seems, are the answer. Because of the clamor there is somehow no problem in finding funds for them.

It seems to us that in neglecting

one program and pressing the other, the city is making a choice about means to the same end, not to different ones. It is making a choice that seems peculiar to us. Suppose for a moment you are a child in Washington Heights or anywhere else. Beyond the dogs and the metal detectors, the classrooms are jammed and classes are taught in toilets and halls. How likely would you — or your teacher — be to keep your motiva-

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tion in the midst of such squalor? If this was what your city said you deserved as your school, how long would it be before you began to prefer the streets as your classroom, where you could take in the thrills and risks of crime as part of your major? How long would it be before you then took a chance that might put you in one of those cells?

It is a very old saying that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and nowhere does it seem more true than in the choice between classrooms and prison cells. Building new schools for kids in New York today costs about \$25,000 per child. Maintaining a child in school costs about \$6,000 per year. In contrast, jails cost \$75,000 per inmate to build, and each inmate costs \$30,000 per year to keep. Over a ten-year period the cost per child of building and maintaining a new school will be some \$85,000; the tab for an inmate in a new prison will be \$375,000. Over the same ten years, a six-year-old stimulated by an attractive school environment has ideally become a sixteen-year-old who has no interest in jail and has saved us almost \$300,000.

The dollars alone are not the whole story. The dollars for the new school do a whole lot of good for others not involved in crime, while the dollars for prisons do absolutely none. New schools serve as community centers available to adults as well as children on weekends and evenings all year-round. Social, cultural, and athletic activities can range from Children's Aid Society programs to the famous Night Basketball. While prisons provide no comparable side benefits, we need schools for a host of reasons quite apart from what they do in maintaining an attractive alternative to a criminal lifestyle.

We are not suggesting that the connection we see is completely direct or that conditions in prisons should not be improved along with conditions in schools. Suppose, however, that you took a middle ground? Suppose you gave, say, half the prison-cell budget — a

handsome sum — to schools. What are the chances you would thereby eliminate the need for as many cells as you would have built? We are betting that they are pretty strong, and that you would have done a lot of good along the way. What then about the argument that we can't afford schools? Of course we can — the money is in hand, just in the wrong line-item in the budget.



"Details," continued from page 2

this meeting to put your candidate on the ballot. Ballots will be mailed to all voting members. Since Chapter bylaws state that a minimum of 100 members constitute a quorum for this meeting, it is important that members who cannot attend return their proxies before November 22. Members elected to the Nominating Committee convene in January and select the slate of officers for the following year, which will be announced at the annual meeting in June.

Adrienne Bresnan, FAIA, assistant commissioner for historic preservation at the New York City Department of General Services, will be inducted as president of the Municipal Engineers of the City of New York on Friday, November 18. The ceremony will take place at the organization's Municipal Engineer of the Year Dinner, where Mohan Jethwani, P.E., associate deputy commissioner for the Department of Environmental Protection, will be named "Engineer of the Year."



Dorothy Alexander
Adrienne Bresnan

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The New York Chapter extends its gratitude to Frank Flores, president of Marsden Reproductions, for generously underwriting the printing costs of *Oculus* for 1994 and 1995. In addition to printing, Marsden's complete line of communications services includes blueprinting and engineering reprographics, graphic design, photographic services, duplicating, custom binder manufacturing, and advertising. Their audiovisual and video department offers a team of specialists who can provide concept development, scripting, studio and location production in domestic and international locations, narration, translation, music tracks, editing, and staging. In addition to their communication services, Marsden's Corporate Travel Services, Inc., acts as a full-service travel agent.

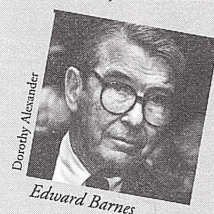
The New York Chapter's Marketing and Public Relations Committee, the New York Association of Consulting Engineers, and the Society for Marketing Professional Services NY/NJ will present "Marketing All-Stars" on Thursday, November 3, at 5:30 pm in the Tishman Auditorium of the New School for Social Research, at 66 West 12th Street. **Philip Johnson**, FAIA, will be the special guest, and Alair Townsend, publisher of *Crain's New York Business*,

will be the keynote speaker. Besides Johnson, six other outstanding design and building industry leaders will be recognized for

their marketing accomplishments and will participate in a panel discussion moderated by **Joan Capelin**, NYS Hon. AIA, of Capelin Communications. The honorees include **Kevin Barnes**, AIA, BHA Consultants; **Margo Grant**, Gensler & Associates, Architects; **A. Eugene Kohn**, FAIA, Kohn Pedersen Fox; **Daniel Tishman**, Tishman Realty

& Construction; **Richard Tomasetti**, Thornton Tomasetti Engineers; and **Sharyn Yorio**, Langan Engineering and Environmental, Inc. For further information and reservations, call Judy Rowe at 683-0023, ext. 17.

Don't forget to buy your tickets for the 1994 Heritage Ball, scheduled this year for Thursday, November 17. Join the Chapter for cocktails and a black-tie dinner at which **Edward Larrabee Barnes**, FAIA, will receive the Chapter's



Dorothy Alexander
Edward Barnes

President's Award. If you can't spring for a table of ten at \$250 per chair, more affordable tickets are available

for dessert and dancing only. Musical entertainment will be provided by Vince Giordano and the Nighthawks. In honor of Barnes, this year's ball is being held in the Equitable Building Atrium. For further information, call Marcy Stanley at 683-0023, ext. 15.

The Women in Architecture Committee begins its fall lecture and conversation series on



Dorothy Alexander
Ada Louise Huxtable

Wednesday, November 16, when **Pilar Viladas** will discuss **Ada Louise Huxtable** and her plainspoken style of architectural criticism. Since 1993, Viladas has been a contributing writer for *Architectural Digest*, and her many accomplishments include serving as an editor at *HG*, *Progressive Architecture*, *Interiors*, and *Skyline*. She is currently working on a book entitled *Los Angeles: A Certain Style*, due in fall 1995. The lecture will be held at 200 Lexington Avenue, on the 16th floor. For more information, call Judy Rowe at 683-0023, ext. 17.

• • •

The City Club of New York announces a call for entries for the 28th annual Bard Awards for Excellence in Architecture and Urban Design. Cochairmen of the awards committee are Lee Harris Pomeroy, FAIA, president of Lee Harris Pomeroy Associates Architects, and Mitchell Goldberg, RA. Jurors are Laurie Beckelman, vice president of LaSalle Partners; John Jay Iselin, president of Cooper Union; Jane McCarthy, trustee at the City Club of New York; Henry Smith-Miller, partner at Smith-Miller + Hawkinson; Peter Stangl, chairman of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority; and Marilyn Jordan Taylor, AIA, partner at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.

Projects must have been completed after January 1, 1990, to be eligible, and must be located anywhere in the five boroughs of New York City. They must be characteristic of New York City, enrich it with their presence, and be accessible to the general public. Large-scale projects, whose construction may be spread over a number of years, will be eligible when a sufficient portion of the project has been completed to indicate the character and quality of the design. Entries must be received by 3:00 pm on December 21, at the City Club of New York, 33 West 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036. For further information or to receive the call for entries, which details the full submission requirements, contact Jane McCarthy at 254-1329.

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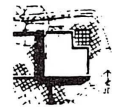
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